HOW CAN I LEAD MY PUPILS TO CHRIST?

EDWARD - LEIGH - PELL

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By

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Preface

YOU cannot lead a child to a stranger. You can lead his body, but you cannot lead *him*. He is not going to a stranger until he gets a glimpse of what is in his heart; and when that happens the stranger will no longer be a stranger: he will be a friend.

It is true that there are a few men and women to whom any normal child will go in an instant; but this proves nothing except that there are men and women who cannot be strangers for more than an instant. They are people whose eyes are transparent soul-windows and whose souls are always peeping out of the windows lovingly at other people. In such cases a child has only to get a glimpse of the stranger's eyes to discover the love that is in his heart; and then, as I have said, the stranger is no longer a stranger but a friend.

If the Master should come into our class to-day in the form in which He came into people's homes when He was in Galilee, the problem of leading our pupils to Him would be a very simple one. In those days His eyes must have been transparent soul-windows and His soul must have been always peeping out of them;

and all that mothers had to do was to take their children by the hand and lead them close enough to Him to enable them to see what was in the windows. Only the child whose mind or soul was terribly dwarfed or misshapen could have needed more.

But the problem of leading a pupil to Christ is not the problem of leading him to the heart of a loved one who has come to visit our home. It is the problem of leading him to the heart of One whom he has never seen. And that is not so simple.

I should not like, however, to convey the impression that it is a discouraging problem. It is in no sense a discouraging problem. If it is not so simple, neither is it very difficult. Johnny's father went to Africa soon after his boy was born and was detained for five years; but the boy's mother succeeded in awakening in him a very real love for his father before he came back. That problem no doubt had its difficulties; but in this task of leading a child to the heart of the invisible Christ we have an advantage—a most extraordinary advantage—which Johnny's mother did not have. We have the help of the invisible Christ Himself.

E. L. P.

Richmond, Va.

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I

SOUL-WINNING AND PEDAGOGY

ARE we quite sure that it is the teacher's business to lead his pupils to Christ? Some teachers are not sure. Some indeed are sure that it is not. The Sunday-school is a school and in a school, they would have us know, a teacher is a teacher, and not an evangelist. Besides, we have Froebel for our master, and according to Froebel all our evangelistic work is wrong.

These good people tell us that if we would follow Froebel we must treat our pupils exactly as we treat plants. We don't treat plants as these old-fashioned teachers who are bent on soul-winning treat their pupils. We don't try to lead them upward. We simply try to surround them with conditions favourable to growth and let them grow. It is as natural for a plant to grow upward as it is for a lark to mount to the skies. And as little children are just like plants it must be just as natural for them to grow upward as it is for plants. Therefore we should give them the

same chance that we give plants. So they argue. We should not try to lead them, for leading, however gentle it may be, is coercion, and coercion is a pedagogical sin—the blackest of pedagogical sins—and will spoil everything. All we have to do—so they assure us—is to surround our pupils with conditions favourable to growth and let nature or nature's God do the rest. If we will keep the sordid earth from hardening around their natures and see that the atmosphere around them is kept pure and warm with love, and if we will give their spirits an abundance of spiritual truth to feed on, they will grow upward toward Christ as the little oak grows toward the skies!

I don't know what we would do nowadays if we did not have pedagogy to flee to for refuge in trouble, or if we could not shift the responsibility for our pedagogical sins upon Froebel. Froebel never taught any such nonsense as some good people are continually putting into his mouth. He did not teach that children should not be led. He did teach that they should not be pulled or pushed; that they should not be forced in a particular direction; but that is a very different matter.

Froebel, like many other great teachers, has suffered much at the hands of his friends He knew as well as we do that the argument from

analogy or resemblances can be made to prove almost anything, and he did not expect his followers to run out his analogy between plants and children to the end. If he had attempted that absurdity himself he would never have taught that the teacher should not coerce his pupils; for he knew that plants are coerced. Nature forces them to stand in one place while they are growing and will not let them budge an inch. And it forces most of them to grow upward. And when we happen upon a plant that is not growing upward we take nature's side and try a little forcing ourselves. Nature or no nature, pedagogy or no pedagogy, we are not going to let our morning-glories run into a mad riot upon the ground. Not, at any rate, if we need them to cover our back porch. They can riot to their hearts' content after they have climbed to the top of our back porch. And that precious pink rambler which we bought for the front porch will have to go where we want it to go, or we will know the reason why.

If Froebel had reasoned as loosely as many of us are doing nowadays, and had happened to notice the striking resemblance between a boy and a colt, he would have reached the conclusion that boys should spend their days in a meadow until they were old enough to go to work, when

they should be "broken in" with bit and bridle as we break in colts.

A child is like a plant in some respects and like an animal in others, but he is neither a plant nor an animal. He is a spirit having an animal body, and he should be treated as a spirit having an animal body. When we do this we shall treat him in some respects as a plant is treated, but not in all. But we shall not think of him as a plant at all. I am sure if Froebel could have foreseen how we would exaggerate his analogy he would not have said a word about plants. A teacher who is confining his efforts to the development of his pupils' brains can afford to think of his pupils as plants; but the teacher who undertakes to develop his pupils—their real, essential, immortal selves—must think of them as spirits or he will inevitably fall into serious pedagogical errors. It is not our business as Sunday-school teachers to develop our pupils' bodies or minds, though our efforts may indirectly result in the development of both: our business is with their essential natures.

Here is a class of—let us say—half a dozen pupils. We call them pupils, but we should think of them not as pupils but as spiritual beings—beings made in the image of God; beings designed for the highest spiritual manhood in the kingdom of God. What we shall do for

these children will help to develop their minds, but our business is not to develop their minds any more than it is to develop their ears. Our business is to coöperate with the Holy Spirit in the development of their essential natures—their spirits. Their bodies have been quickened and are growing toward physical manhood. Their minds have been quickened and are growing toward intellectual manhood. Now we must give attention to their spirits. We must take hold of their minds and hearts and lead them to the point where they can come in contact with the quickening Spirit of Christ, and we must coöperate with Christ in breaking the chains of ignorance and sin that hold them down to the animal level and in His work of developing them toward spiritual manhood—toward the achievement of their divine destiny as sons of God in His kingdom.

And if we are to do this we cannot treat them altogether as plants. Plants and the spirits of men don't grow in the same way. Plants grow by addition. The spirits of men grow largely by subtraction. Plants live and grow by selfishness; spirits live and grow by sacrifice.

The trouble about the plant method of developing children is that it ignores the facts of the child's moral nature. It assumes that it is as

natural for a child to develop upward as it is for a plant; that it is natural for a child to do right rather than wrong if we will only surround him with favourable conditions. One may assume that in the laboratory, but one never has a chance to assume it anywhere else. I have never known any one who had spent as much as a week in a nursery to show any enthusiasm for the doctrine that humanity is incurably good and all that is needed is to surround a child with favourable conditions and let nature do the rest.

But be that as it may, and admitting for the sake of peace that Froebel really taught that children must be treated just as plants are treated, and admitting also that plants are never coerced either by nature or by our gardeners, the fact remains that we have a greater Authority than either Froebel or our gardeners, and He has taught us that our children are something more than plants to be fed; that they are lambs to be led; and not mere lambs either, but human lambs—lambs with moral natures; natures that need something more than a chance to go in the right direction; natures that need something more than to have the right direction pointed out to them. What farmer does not know that you cannot get a little lamb or even a big sheep to go to a given place by simply turn-

ing him loose and pointing out the place to him? And what mother does not know the same thing about little human lambs and the biggest human sheep that ever were turned loose on the world's common?

Pedagogy does not teach us that we must not lead our pupils; but pedagogy or no pedagogy we must lead them. And we must lead them to Christ. It is not enough to break the chain of ignorance that binds them and turn them loose and point out Christ to them. We must not only give them opportunities to accept Christ, but we must take them by the hand and lead them to Christ. We must not pull them, but we must lead them. And we must lead them by the hand. We must help them on toward Christ with the gentle urgings of love.

The public school teacher may treat his pupils as plants or mechanisms made to go in a given direction if he will, but in the Sunday-school we are not dealing with plants or mechanisms; we are dealing with spirits; with moral beings—beings with the power of choice; beings who have a will of their own. And when we deal with human beings who have a will of their own we must lead them, just as we must lead lambs who have a will of their own, and ramblers and morning-glories that act as if they had a will of their own.

We must not force them, as we sometimes force lambs and morning-glories and ramblers, for we have no more right to tyrannize over their moral natures than we have to tyrannize over their physical natures; but we must lead them.

But after all the question whether our pupils should be led or not is already settled so far as we are concerned. We may discuss it as much as we please, we may take either side we please, but we cannot deny that whether we believe it is right or not we are already leading them. If our pupils are learning anything from us, we are leading them; and we may be sure that they are learning—something. My pupils may not catch the lesson I am trying to teach them out of the Book of Life, but I may be sure that they have not missed all the lessons I have been unconsciously teaching them out of the book of my life—the lessons they have been reading in my eyes, my hand touch, the tone of my voice, my visible conduct; the lessons that have somehow made their way into their souls from my secret conduct. Something I have been thinking in the quiet of my room, something I have been feeling in the bottom of my soul, something I have been doing in the secret places of my life, something I have never thought of as being related to them in any way has been continually

going out of me and getting hold of them and leading them—somewhere. The only question we have to settle is not whether we should lead our pupils—we are already leading them—but whether we shall lead them to Christ. Shall we see to it that from this moment all the influences, conscious or unconscious, that go out from us to them shall be influences for Christ?

II

THE VERY FIRST THING

DID you ever try to do a loving service from a sheer sense of duty? Then you know what it is to attempt the impossible. It is hard enough to perform a service of any sort when one's heart is not in it: it is impossible to perform a service of love when one's heart revolts against it. I know there are many people who think they have done it. Many a wife has gone on trying to do loving deeds for a man long after he has trampled upon her love and killed it; and many a wife has soothed herself to sleep at night with the consoling reflection that she had not failed. But one's neighbours know better. One's neighbours know that a woman's attempts at loving service where there is no love are as sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal. Even the man who has killed her love knows it.

There are some things which we can do and some things which we must do in this life solely from a hard sense of duty; but a loving service

is not one of them. One can be driven to a loving deed by a sense of obligation, but if nothing else comes to one's help he will make a sad mess of it. And this is true whether one is the wife of a worthless husband or the husband of a worthless wife, or only a plain Sunday-school teacher.

Winning a soul for Christ is not a mere matter of duty—something we can do simply from a sense of duty, something we can do if we must—if we are driven to it like galley-slaves. Soul-winning is not a task for galley-slaves driven by the whip of conscience. It is a service of love and it can be done only under the compulsion of love.

This is the fundamental thing. If we are going to lead our pupils to Christ we are going to a service of love and we must go under the urgings of love.

But this is not all. There are teachers who are satisfied to go under the urgings of love without stopping to inquire what sort of love it is that is urging them. There is a love that will help us to win our pupils to Christ and there is a love that will win them only to our own hearts. I once knew a popular evangelist who never left a town without leaving hundreds of converts behind him, most of whom ceased to be converts before the week was out. He was a man of

charming personality, a warm, loving, gracious soul with wonderful magnetism, who drew people to his heart as a magnet draws needles, and both he and his converts sincerely believed that they were drawn to Christ. People fell in love with him and in the enthusiasm of their new passion felt that they loved everybody and, of course, loved Jesus. How could they help loving Jesus —*his* Jesus?

It is amazing to see how easily the average teacher falls under this illusion. Of course we must win our pupils to our own hearts: if we don't I don't see how we can hope to lead them to Christ. But it is pathetic to see a teacher trying to win the hearts of his pupils under the impression that if he wins them for himself his work is done, or that, at any rate, there will be nothing else to do but hand them over to Christ.

This illusion is not confined to the Sunday-school, but it is in the Sunday-school that it is most at home. I suppose this is because Sunday-school teaching, being a labour of love, naturally attracts loving and lovable people, and that in consequence we have a large number of teachers of the gracious, magnetic type who have found it so easy to get young people to do things simply by winning their love that they can see no necessity for doing anything more. It is so

much nicer to put one's arms around a child and love him into the kingdom of God than to go to the trouble of teaching him all those hard things about the kingdom and the way into it. How many teachers of the sweet, gracious type are happy to-day in the belief that they have led all their pupils to Christ, when, as everybody else knows, most of them have only fallen in love with their teacher and agreed to accept Christ for her sake! We must win our pupils to our own hearts; but let us not imagine that, having done this and nothing more, we can hand them over to Christ. We can easily hand them over to the Church, but that is another matter. I cannot draw a child to my own heart until I have let him see what is in my own heart, and I have no right to expect him to give himself to Christ if I do not give him as good a chance to see into the heart of Christ. And how can I help him to see into the heart of Christ if I am not close to that heart myself?

There is but one thing that will save us from this fatal blunder. So long as we cultivate our love for our pupils alone we shall draw them to our hearts, but there they will stop. If we want to draw them on toward Christ we must have a love for Christ that is at least as strong as our love for them. We must develop a great pas-

sion for our pupils, but we must also develop a great passion for Christ.

We must have this passion for Christ not only because it will keep Christ before us as our goal and not allow us to forget that we are trying to lead our pupils to Him instead of merely winning them to our own hearts, but because it will help us in our teaching to teach things which the Holy Spirit can use in helping our pupils to know and accept Christ, and also because it will keep our eyes open for opportunities to teach these things. It is amazing how often these opportunities present themselves to us when once our hearts are set on fire for Christ. A consuming passion of any sort makes one wonderfully alert, and a great passion for Christ and for souls opens one's eyes to opportunities that one never has a hint of under ordinary circumstances. It may not be pedagogical to go out of our way in teaching a lesson to remind our pupils of Christ's love for them or of their need of Him; but when our hearts are set on winning every one of them for Christ, it is remarkable how often we find an opportunity to turn their thoughts toward Christ without going out of our way at all. Without this passion one can teach the whole life of Christ without finding an opportunity to present Christ; with it many a teacher has found a splendid op-

portunity in lessons that had no reference to Christ.

Do not misunderstand me. I do not mean to say that if a teacher is on fire for Christ and for souls he will be always talking about Christ. I can find little for emulation in the example of those sincere but misguided souls who feel that they are called to worry people into the kingdom of heaven. The Master's name was not given us to use as a whip to tease or nag or weary people until they are ready to accept Him or do anything else for the sake of peace. All our talk should be full of the Master's spirit and should lead in His direction, but we should not take His name in vain; we should not cheapen it or neutralize it by useless repetition—by eternally asking our pupils to accept Him and telling them what they are missing by not accepting Him, by talking about Him after the manner of those overheated enthusiasts who stop strangers on the street to inquire whether they are going to heaven or hell. We may persuade children to join the Church that way—they may join to get rid of us—but we cannot lead them to Christ. Sinners have gone to Jesus out of fear, but no one has ever really gone to Him to get rid of those who were worrying him into going.

But, again, do not misunderstand me. I do

not mean that we should be very chary about asking our pupils to accept Christ or that we should seldom mention His name. I am simply trying to say that it is our duty to try to win our pupils for Him and not to waste our time in the impossible task of worrying them into accepting Him.

How can I develop this passion for Christ? The answer is simple. The fire must be kindled in my heart at the feet of Christ. I must go to Him. I must seek His face at least as often as I seek the faces of my loved ones for whom my heart is always in a white flame. And when the fire is kindled the flame must grow not only at the feet of Christ but in the study of Christ and in the service of Christ. It will not grow if I only worship Him. It will not grow if I only study His Word. It will not grow if I only toil in His service. It will grow only if I do all three. It will become a consuming passion only if I worship with all my heart and study with all my mind and serve with all my might.

III

TEACHING THE PUPIL ABOUT CHRIST

WE cannot win without love, but we must have something more than love —something more at any rate than a blind love—if we would win a pupil for Christ. It takes a certain amount of intelligence—or perhaps I should say it takes an intelligent love. If I love John blindly, my love may win him to my own heart, but it will not win him to Joe. Nor will my blind love for John combined with my blind love for Joe do it. If I want to get John to love Joe I must use something besides my heart. I must use my mind. I must tell John what I know about Joe. I must talk to him about Joe's lovable qualities. I must tell him what a wonderful friend Joe has been to me; how much pleasure he has given me; how often he has helped me; what a splendid fellow he is in every way. I must think the matter over and decide what there is in Joe that would especially attract a fellow like John, and I must tell John about it. And of course, I must be continually

looking for opportunities to bring the two boys together. I must not rest until I have done everything in my power to make John know Joe as well as I know him.

So if I want to lead John to know and love Christ, I have got to have something more than a blind love for John or a blind love for Christ or a blind love for both. I must have a love that will make use of my intelligence. I must know John and I must know Christ. I must know John so well that I will know just what will attract him, and I must know Christ so well that I will be able to decide at a glance just what there is in Christ that will attract him. And while I must tell him everything I know about Christ I must lay special emphasis upon these things. And I must bring to my task of getting John acquainted with Christ all the earnestness and common sense I have, as well as all the knowledge I can use. I must bring to it the best there is in me—just what I would bring to the task of winning John to Joe if Joe was more to me than anybody else in the world and I was ready to give anything in the world I had to make John know him as well as I know him.

This is the thought that I should have in my mind—certainly in my heart—in all my teaching. This is my business—not to make my

pupils better acquainted with the Bible that they may be intelligent pupils, but to help them to get better acquainted with the Christ of the Bible that they may give themselves to Him. If in my task of winning John to Joe I should show John some letters I had received from Joe, I should do it not for the purpose of getting John better acquainted with good letters, or with the art of writing good letters, but for the purpose of getting him to know Joe. What would John think of me if I should forget all about Joe and use Joe's letters for the purpose of familiarizing him with the literature of letters? And what must Jesus think of us if in teaching the Bible to our pupils for the specific purpose of helping them to know Christ, we should forget what we are about and devote ourselves simply to the task of familiarizing them with the characteristics of sacred literature or with the geography, zoology and botany of sacred literature?

It is folly to try to lead our pupils to accept Christ if we are not willing to take the trouble to really teach them about Christ. The notion that they can be converted now and taught when they are older has no excuse for existence except human laziness. We do not begin to draw our pupils to our own hearts until they have begun to learn something about us, and we are not go-

ing to begin to draw them to Christ until they have begun to learn something about Christ. Nobody loves a stranger. Love does not begin until all strangeness has worn off. And so when the wise teacher takes a class, the first thing he does is to help his pupils get rid of the feeling that their teacher is a stranger. This he does by helping them first of all to find out something about himself. He may not find it necessary to talk about himself, but in some way he is going to make his pupils see that he is human like themselves, that he has the same feelings they have, that he knows how a fellow feels, that his heart beats in unison with theirs, that he is interested in at least some things that interest them. He tries to find out what Tom likes and if Tom likes the same thing that he does, he lets him know it. If he discovers that Dick is interested in electricity and he happens to be interested in electricity himself, his eyes will telegraph it to Dick forthwith.

It is in much the same way that we must go about winning our pupils for Christ. Whatever influences we may bring to bear upon them, however earnestly we may reason with them or plead with them or plead with Christ for them, we have no right to expect them to give their hearts to Christ so long as He is a stranger to

them. They must know something about Christ. It is not necessary that they should know everything about Him any more than it is necessary for them to know everything about us before they are willing to give their hearts to us; but they must know something; they must at least know about Him what they must know about us; they must at least have a glimpse of His heart.

Let us pause here and read that last sentence again. Time and again we have been assured that if we will only teach our pupils about Christ the best we know how the Holy Spirit will honour our efforts, and we may expect to see them sooner or later give themselves to Christ; and time and again earnest teachers, encouraged by this assurance, have gone to work and spent a whole year drilling their pupils in the facts of Christ's life, only to find at the end that they were as far from Christ as ever. Plainly there is a mistake somewhere. But where? Of course we can say that the assurance itself was a mistake, a very grave mistake. Nobody has a right to say to a teacher that if he will faithfully teach his pupils about Christ they will one day come to Christ. The Holy Spirit is not going to force our pupils into the kingdom of God against their wills as a reward for our faithfulness. But the trouble is not always with the pupils. In

many cases the secret of failure lies in the character of the teaching. It is quite possible to spend a whole year drilling our pupils in the bare facts of the life of Christ, and in the geography and zoology and botany and Oriental customs shedding light upon His life and teachings, and not give them a single glimpse of His heart—something they must have before they will ever give their hearts to Him, whatever else they may learn about Him. I do not mean that such a drill is not important. It is important, and we can hardly devote too much time to it. What I mean to say is that drilling one's pupils in the material facts of the life of Christ does not win them for Christ. We may drill them in these facts forever and never lead them to see in Christ that which they must see before they will open their hearts to Him. I believe with all my heart in the power of the Word, and I know that the faithful teaching of the Word will bear fruit; but this much-vaunted notion, so fondly cherished by teachers who have somehow mistaken the purely material facts of the Bible for the Word itself, that the teaching of these mere facts—annals, chronology, zoology, botany, Oriental customs—will in some strange, magical way result in the conversion of one's pupils is sheer superstition. There is no more saving power in

the literature of the Bible taught purely as literature or in the history or geography of the Bible taught purely as history or geography, than there is in the literature, history, or geography taught in our public schools. These things are important; as means for the conveyance of God's message to men they are tremendously important; but when we take them apart from the purpose for which they were designed and teach them to our pupils simply for their own intrinsic value we have no more right to expect the Holy Spirit to use our teaching in the salvation of our pupils than we would if we were giving them lessons in chemistry. If I should take a class composed of pupils who had never seen me and, without so much as shaking hands with them, should take my seat and in a purely professional way drill them in the mere material facts of my life and never give them a glimpse of my heart, I would not win their hearts if I drilled them till doomsday. How can I hope to win my pupils for Christ if I content myself with drilling them in the purely material facts of His life and never try to show them what is in His heart?

IV

HELPING THE PUPIL TO REALIZE CHRIST

IT is one thing to know about Christ; it is another thing to know Christ. And if our pupils are to know Christ we must do more than teach them about Christ: we must make Christ real to them. We must help them to realize Him.

There are boys and girls in our Sunday-schools who have been taught about Christ from their infancy that never think of Christ as anything more than a character in a book of fiction. They have never visualized Him. Their minds have never reached out and grasped Him as a living being.

Take the case of the bright-eyed boy in yonder class. Let us call him John Matthews. John Matthews has been taught about Jesus from his cradle. He knows the whole story of Jesus. He believes everything that has been taught about Jesus. Yet it is perfectly plain that John does not know Jesus. There is no difference in his mind between Jesus and a character in a story. Now

and then when there is a lesson on the resurrection and the teacher speaks of Christ as a living, present being, there comes into his mind a vague idea of the living Christ; but even then Christ becomes nothing more to him than a passing shadow. Naturally John has never had anything to do with Christ. He has never come to Christ and put himself in Christ's hands. How could he put himself in the hands of a shadow?

There are good people who would tell us that this is a matter for the Holy Spirit and that we have nothing to do with it. But this will not satisfy those of us who are ambitious to work with God. If we cannot do God's work it is still quite possible that He might let us work with Him or at least wait on Him while He is working.

We do not understand just how the Holy Spirit makes Christ real to men, but we know that He usually makes use of two pictures—Christ as He appears in the Gospels and the Christ of the Gospels as He appears in living men. These two pictures are held up before men's eyes and it is while they are gazing upon them that the Holy Spirit brings the living Christ before them. Now we cannot do the Holy Spirit's work, but we can hold up these pictures for Him. And this God expects us to do. This indeed is our chief business as teachers. We are

to hold up these two pictures of Christ before the eyes of our pupils and continue to hold them up until the Holy Spirit touches their eyes and the living Christ flashes upon their vision.

It may seem an humble task, but it is a task that calls for the best that is in us. If there is one question which we should ask ourselves oftener than any other it is this: If I knew nothing more of the Christ of the Gospels than I have imparted to others how would He appear to me? Some of us, I fear, would be horrified if we could see the image of the historic Christ which we have photographed upon the minds of our pupils. Many of our Primary teachers have done their work well and the picture which I find in the minds of little children is often very clear and very beautiful and satisfying; but there are many pupils in the Intermediate and Senior grades whose mental image of Christ is either a blur or a mere fragment. These older pupils are not going to have a clearer conception of Christ until their teachers get a clearer conception of Him, and this is not going to happen so long as their teachers study the Gospels as a mass of unrelated fragments. The Bible does not work miracles to cover up our mental indolence, and it is not going to give us a true and vivid image of Christ as a reward for reading a few passages

in the Gospels, chosen at random, at the rate of a dozen verses a day. Try to form a mental picture of the hero of the latest novel by reading the first page to-day, the hundredth to-morrow and the seventy-fifth the next day, and see what you will get. The surest way to get a vivid impression of the hero of a story is to read the story at a sitting; and the surest way to get a vivid impression of the Hero of the Gospels is to read a Gospel at a sitting. If you have never tried it you have missed a wonderful experience. It is still more wonderful when one reads the four Gospels in four successive days. I cannot describe it, but have you ever wandered off in the fields at sunset and stood still until all the world had slipped away from you and nothing was left but the soft evening air, which presently seemed to quiver with an unseen Presence?

But our pupils must see something more than the picture of Jesus as He appears in the Gospels. They must see His image in living men. And this, I fear, John Matthews has never seen. Since his mother's death he has never been intimately associated with any one who had been transformed into the image of Christ. His Sunday-school teacher is a well-meaning woman but she is not the sort of woman who reminds people of Christ. Nor has she ever done anything

for John that led him to think of Christ. No teacher has ever helped John to see Jesus in the world around him, and while he has often heard men and women speak kind words and has witnessed many noble deeds, it has never occurred to him to associate these things with the Master. No teacher has ever told him that the kind words and noble deeds which make this old world worth while are tokens of the presence of the Master in the hearts of men. Every day as he goes about the world he sees signs of Something that is better than his own heart, but no one has yet pointed out these things to him and bade him behold the living Christ.

But is there no other way to hold up before our pupils the picture of our Lord as He appears in living men?

I know a teacher who is always telling the story of Jesus of Nazareth. It makes no difference whether the lesson is in the Old Testament or the New, she always finds room for the gospel picture. Just as when Jesus walked in the fields of Galilee everything in nature reminded Him of the Father and the Father's loving care, so in making her way through the lesson-story everything makes her think of Christ. And however foreign to Christ the lesson-story may seem to be, she brings Christ into it as naturally as she wel-

comes her friends into her own home. If you should listen to her you would probably say that she fails to picture the living Christ. But if you should stop listening and look into her face for a moment you would find that you were mistaken. She is herself a wonderful image of the living Christ—the most wonderful I have ever known.

It is so easy for our pupils to flock to Christ when His image is before their eyes!

V

HELPING THE PUPIL TO SEE THE TRUTH

CHRIST may become real to a child in an instant. But whether the vision comes to him like a flash, or so slowly that he does not know just when Christ ceased to be a mere character in a book and became a real, living being, the task of helping him to realize Him is no small matter. It is not something to be attempted only now and then when the child seems ripe for it; it is something the teacher must work for without ceasing. He must work for it in all his teaching about Christ. In other words he must prepare the way for the child to come to a realization of Christ by helping him to see the truth about Christ. And to do this he must learn the art of presenting the truth in pictures.

All great teachers are great picture-makers. Soul-winning teachers are always wonderful picture-makers. You may talk about a truth until doomsday and your talk may amount to nothing.

Teachers who try to talk their children into accepting Christ never succeed in leading them to Christ. They may lead them into the Church: some children will go just to get rid of the talk; but that is another matter. A child is not going to accept Christ until Christ becomes real to him; Christ is not going to become real to him until he grasps the truth about Him; he is not going to grasp the truth until he sees it, and we are not going to make him see it until we present it before him in a picture—a word picture.

And yet there are earnest teachers all over America who not only never attempt to picture a truth to their pupils, but they never make any use of the pictures that are given them.

"Oh! never mind the story: let's talk about the truth it teaches."

As if one could get the truth out of a story by ignoring the story!

A story is not a basket from which you can take the truth as you would take an orange and hand it to a pupil; it is a picture setting forth a truth, and if you want the pupil to see the truth you must hold up the picture before him.

This is the oldest, the most thoroughly tested, the most successful pedagogical method known to man; it is the method by which at least nine-tenths of us have come into possession of about

all the truths we have ever learned; yet there are thousands of teachers in our day of boasted pedagogical progress who turn from it with a sneer because, they say, stories are for little children anyway! "My boys are big enough to think," said Dignified Dullness, "and I am not going to teach them with pictures." And yet practically everything that has found its way into his own mind has come from pictures—either physical or mental. He has learned from life or he has learned from stories of life—all pictures. He has found that more than sixty per cent of his Bible is in story form (just pictures) and that the greater part of the remainder is full of imagery (pictures again), and in his reading he confines himself to the pictures and leaves the rest to the theologians. When he picks up the morning paper he reads nothing but news stories, and when he wants a new book, he buys a novel or a biography or perhaps a history (all picture books) and leaves the essays for anybody who may like them. He has never been able to get interested in an essay or an editorial (unless it was full of imagery), yet he insists upon devoting the lesson hour to a discussion of the truths of the lesson after the essay or editorial fashion.

I have just been counting the pictures that rise in the mind when one reads the words of the

world's greatest teacher. Jesus was the greatest of all picture-makers. His talks were never mere talks—something to listen to—He made people see while they listened. This is the fundamental secret of teaching: anybody can make one's hearers hear; the true teacher makes his hearers see. In intimate heart-to-heart talks one does not need to illumine one's thoughts with pictures, for hearts that are close together can feel when they cannot see; yet even our Lord's last tender talk with His disciples before His death keeps its place in our minds largely because of its pictures—the Father's house with the many "mansions," the fruitful vine, the pruner at work, men gathering dead branches and burning them, the woman in anguish, frightened disciples scattered abroad like sheep fleeing before a wolf. And when we come to His direct teachings they are practically all illumined with stories or imagery of one sort or another. The Sermon on the Mount is a mosaic of pictures, though doubtless one lacking imagination would miss some of them. Read it and watch the panorama (to change the figure) as it passes before the eye: a measure of worthless salt; a city crowning a hill; a lamp on a lampstand and an empty bushel lying in the corner of the room; all sorts of people, including hypo-

crites and fools; an altar and an offering; a judge holding court and a prison; heaven and hell; the throne of God, the earth, Jerusalem; an eye, a tooth, a cheek, a coat, a cloak, sunshine and rain; treasures, birds, lilies—picture after picture all the way to the ill-fated house washed down the wady in a storm. And what a world of truth is in them all! If you and I should undertake to warn our pupils against faultfinding we might spend the lesson hour droning lifeless platitudes and at the end wonder if our words were worth while. Jesus wasted no time in mere talk; He simply said, "Look at that man with a great beam in his eye trying to get a mote out of his neighbour's eye." That was enough; the people understood and smiled; and we may be sure they never forgot it. You can hear them repeat it to their faultfinding children, and you can hear those children in their old age telling it to their children's children.

Jesus did not attempt to give His hearers the naked truth: why should you and I think ourselves equal to such a task? Suppose God, instead of sending His Son into the world, had chosen to proclaim from heaven the bare truths which Jesus taught by His life and character—how many of them would the world have learned, never to forget? How can you and I think

lightly of pictures when we owe all that we have and are to a picture—Jesus the picture of the Father, the very "image of his substance"; that marvellous likeness which the Father sent to us with His love?

But it is not enough to present the truths of the Bible in pictures: we should present them in the pictures in which we find them. Many teachers have come to realize the importance of the story in teaching the Bible who have yet to realize the importance of teaching the Bible story. Take, for example, the story of Joseph. The teacher who has sufficient imagination to present Joseph so vividly that the pupils can see him as plainly as they can see the superintendent standing on the platform, will convey to them in this picture a clearer idea of the hand of God in human life than they could get from any secular source whatever; yet there are teachers who do not hesitate to turn away from this wonderful story and attempt to teach the truths which it contains by telling a newspaper story which happens to be more to their taste. I do not object to the newspaper story in its proper place, but when we choose it in preference to the Bible story to teach the truth which the latter contains we are not only guilty of a pedagogical absurdity, but we are guilty of the crime of be-

littling the Word of God—a crime which may destroy the pupils' reverence for the Word and turn them permanently against it.

When God gives us chestnuts in burrs we may safely assume that He does not expect us to swallow the burrs with the nuts; but when He gives us truths in pictures even nature itself teaches us—as Paul would say—that we must receive and treasure the pictures along with the truths. The burrs are provided to protect the chestnuts until they come to our hands, but the pictures are provided to help us see the truths when they are brought before our eyes.

It seems to me that there is no sin into which we teachers fall so easily as the sin of unfairness. I don't think I have ever known a teacher to complain of the shortcomings of his pupils who had given them a square deal and a fair chance. Some of us are always requiring our pupils to make bricks without straw, as when we insist that they shall study their lessons at home without giving them the slightest hint as to how lessons are to be studied either at home or anywhere else. This is bad enough, but it is nothing compared with the sin of depriving one's pupils of the help which God has provided for them, and this we do whenever we take a truth out of the picture in which God has re-

vealed it and offer it to them in a form in which they will never see it.

But if we are going to be fair to our pupils, we must be fair to ourselves. In other words, if we are going to give them what God has provided for them, we must make full use of what God has provided for us. In bringing the past to light we have found that the most useful instrument at our command is the imagination. The difference between an archæologist and a ditcher is largely a difference of imagination. Without imagination the most learned man in the world will dig little more out of a buried city than a ditcher. The ditcher sees only with his naked eye ; the archæologist sees with his imagination—the eye of his mind. The ditcher uncovers a few stones ; the archæologist sees a world-famous palace. The ditcher draws back in disgust from an unsightly mummy ; the archæologist feasts his eyes upon a living Pharaoh in all his glory. The imagination is the magic wand with which we touch the dead past and make it live before us. The Bible is a storehouse of the past which we are trying to bring to light and to life ; yet, strange to say, in our efforts to get at its treasures we have made less use of the imagination than any other faculty we possess. Some of us have used our analytical faculty until we have

dissected the Bible to the last bone and picked the bones. What we need to do is to bring the bones together and to bring our imagination to bear upon them and lay the sinews and flesh upon them and put breath in them and cause them to live and stand upon their feet, an exceeding great army. You can take Munkacsy's great picture, "Christ before Pilate," and cut it up into a hundred pieces and lay the arms of the Romans in one place and their legs in another and the heads of the Jews in another and all the fingers of both Romans and Jews in another until you have gotten at all the facts of the picture, but you will never get at the truth that is in the picture by that means, though you may dissect it into a million pieces. To see the truth you must look upon the picture as a whole, and to see the picture you must use your imagination—you must use the eye of your mind. And what is true of the painted picture on Munkacsy's canvas is just as true of the word pictures of Christ before Pilate in Matthew's Gospel. If we want to see the truths that are in the Bible and make our pupils see them, we must use our imagination to bring the pictures that contain the truth before our minds—and theirs.

If I had my life to go over again, I think I would let a great many of our teaching problems

alone and devote more of my time to mental photography. I would spend days and nights in trying to see, realize, and grasp the things that are set before my eyes in my Bible and in trying to reproduce them before the eyes of my pupils so that they might see, realize, and grasp them. In other words, I would make the most of my imagination. If I were given the story of Jesus to teach, I would not be content to read it as a mere record, to search through it as I would a map, to study it as I would a diagram. I would run my eye through the printed pages until I could see the whole story from Bethlehem to Calvary spread out before my mental vision. Then I would look steadily upon the picture until I discovered its central feature—the Man. And then I would look upon the Man until I could see Him breathe; see Him open His lips; hear the tones of His voice; see Him put forth His hand and touch the little sick baby in its mother's arms and see its wan cheek turn crimson and hear the little thing laugh and coo; see Him place His hand on a crippled boy's head and see the little fellow drop his sticks and go running and leaping as happy as he could be; see Him touch the eyes of a blind man and see the man look down upon his little daughter at his side and see the child throw her arms about

her father's neck and then drop on her knees before the Master and cover His hand with her kisses.

This I would do; and when I went to my class, I would make my pupils see what I saw. I might not tell them much of what I had thought about Jesus or what I had reasoned out about Jesus or of what other men were saying about Jesus, but I would make them see Jesus.

Teaching by pictures, physical or mental, is the oldest of all pedagogical methods; so old that it must have originated with God Himself. God knew that the naked truth would make no impression upon men—it never does. And He knew that they would look at pictures. Who does not look at pictures? And He knew also that when they saw the picture they would very likely see the truth, and they would remember the truth because they could not forget the picture. And so whenever He came to teach men He came making pictures, sometimes for their physical eyes, sometimes for their mental vision. When He came to give Adam his first lesson in law, He did not spend an hour trying to explain that His laws were built upon kindness and that they allowed men all the liberty that was good for them. He simply said: "See that tree? You and Eve may eat of the fruit of every tree

in the garden except that one." You can hear Eve saying to Adam after He had gone: "How kind of God!" And you are sure that she never ceased to say it until Satan came and put the devilish notion into her head that God was trying to deprive her of something. That was God's way everywhere and on all occasions. When He undertook to unfold to men the meaning of worship He did not give them a sermon on prayer; He simply gave them an altar. When He sent His prophets into the world their mouths were full of imagery (word pictures), and some of them had their hands full of objects for object lessons. And when at last He gave to the world His greatest revelation, instead of trumpeting the naked truth from heaven, He simply sent us, as I have said before, a picture of Himself, the Son of God, who was declared to be a perfect likeness of God. Moreover, when Jesus came, He adopted His Father's method, and from the beginning to the end of His career He taught in pictures. I do not wonder that our most successful teachers are those who make the most of the pictures in the Word, for they are following in the footsteps of the Father and the Son.

There is one reason for the use of pictures in teaching that is often overlooked even by many who use them, and that is that there are many

truths which can be shown in pictures, especially stories, which are, of course, simply word pictures, that cannot find adequate expression through any other means. There are Bible stories which make us see and feel truths which we have never been able to express—truths which the greatest masters of language have never fully expressed—and the only way we can make our pupils see these truths is to make them see the stories themselves. Take, for example, the story of the three "mighties" who risked their lives to bring David a drink of water from the well by the Bethlehem gate. You might talk to your pupils an hour and you could not make them sensible of the high feeling which caused David to pour the water on the ground after it was brought to him. The truth in this story is something to be seen and felt, not described. The true teacher will not attempt to describe it; he will simply try to make the pupils see the story. Rather he will try to make them see it as he sees it. If he can do this, they will very likely see and feel the truth as he sees and feels it.

This suggests a question which I am going to try to answer with the hope that my answer will enable some one to put to practical use what I have already said. How does the true teacher make his pupils see the story? I think that I

can answer this by answering another question: How does the teacher make himself see the story? You do not see a story by simply reading it. You read this little story of David's three mighties a dozen times, and it made no impression upon you until the other day, when you lingered over it, and brought your imagination to bear upon it. First you thought about David. You recalled all that you had learned about him. You tried to get clearly before you the kind of man he was. You thought of him until you began to realize him; you could almost see him standing before you; you could almost hear the tones of his voice. Then you recalled what you had learned about the devotion of David's people to him. From the day that he won the victory over the giant he was the idol of Israel. Everybody loved him. Everybody sang his praises. His soldiers were ready to die for him. Then you fixed your mind upon the story before you and tried to imagine just how it all happened; and presently the picture of it all began to form in your mind, and you could see it as distinctly as if it were happening before your very eyes. You saw David and his three mighties standing on a hilltop watching the Philistine forces that had taken possession of the country around Bethlehem. You saw David

wipe the perspiration from his brow, and then you noticed that his lips were parched with thirst, and you knew that the day was as hot as the sands of the desert. You let your imagination have full rein, and you saw David's eyes wander from the Philistines to his native town, and then you saw him dreaming. He went away back to the days of his boyhood. He saw in his vision the well at the town gate. A crowd of boys, himself among them, stood around it, all drenched with perspiration and all famished, for they had just come in from a fierce foot race half-way to Hebron and back again. And every boy was jostling the rest good-naturedly in his efforts to be "next." At last his time came. How he drank and drank and drank! How delicious! He couldn't get enough. And how cold!—cold as the snows of Lebanon. You watched David as he dreamed it all, and you saw his very soul fairly shrivel up with thirst—shrivel like autumn leaves before a fire—and you heard him exclaim feverishly: "Oh, if I only had a drink of water from the well by the gate!"

Then you saw the three mighties dash down the hill, run through the Philistine lines, draw the water at the well, fill a jar, and run back again. You saw the astonished faces of the Philistines, and you laughed; for they were so

palsied with astonishment that they didn't raise a hand against the men. You saw David turn pale and tremble like an aspen, and then, as the men came back up the hill, you saw the blood rush back into his cheeks while his lips quivered and his eyes filled with tears. And you heard his sobbing cry: "Jehovah bless you, my men! You don't know how I appreciate it, but I can't drink it—never, never! Why, it's your life's blood; for you have put your lives in jeopardy for me."

And you saw him turn his eyes toward heaven, and you heard him say: "It is the blood of these men who offered their lives for me; I offer it to my God."

And you saw him bow his head and slowly pour the precious water upon the ground as an oblation to Jehovah. You saw it all; and when you heard David say, "I can't drink it," you saw something in his eyes, and you heard something in the tone of his voice that told you what he meant—something so high and noble and so fine that you have never been able to express it.

Thus you saw the story, and it is in the same way that you are to make your pupils see it. Set their imagination to work. Say to them, "Let's see if we can't imagine just how it happened;" and then begin the story and have

them help you with it. Very likely they will soon take it out of your mouth and complete it without your aid. And when they are through you will look into their eyes and see that they too have discovered David's secret.

It is in this way that we must help our pupils to see the truth about Jesus. Here are these stories about Jesus. Every one of them is a picture in which our pupils can see a truth about Him provided we have seen it with our imagination so that we can make them see it with theirs. Why should we be content to talk to them about Jesus when we can hold up these speaking pictures before them?

VI

LEADING THE PUPIL TO APPLY THE TRUTH

THE soul-winning teacher must be pedagogical—all really successful soul-winners are pedagogical whether they know it or not; but the teacher who attempts to put into practice everything that is put forth in the name of pedagogy will never become a successful soul-winner. There is a vast difference between pedagogy and the rules which are sometimes given us in the name of pedagogy.

This ought to go without saying, but I know of nothing that is causing more failures in teaching to-day, especially in our up-to-date schools and among our most promising and most enthusiastic young teachers than the failure to distinguish this difference—nothing except the want of spiritual life.

The promising young teacher is as hungry as an ostrich and almost as undiscriminating. He wants knowledge; he wants equipment; he wants any and everything that promises to add a hair's-breadth to his pedagogical stature, and

like the ostrich he jumps greedily at everything that looks as if it could be swallowed. He will feed out of the hand of a psychological pretender or a pedagogical smatterer as confidently as the ostrich will feed out of the hand of the small boy who, with true scientific spirit, is seeking to determine the food value (to ostriches) of coarsely ground glass. But here the resemblance to the ostrich ends. The ostrich can swallow anything with impunity—so it is said. The young teacher cannot. I have known more than one promising teacher to swallow a few half-baked half-truths handed out by an incompetent teacher of teachers with fatal results.

You don't have to get a diploma in order to win an audience of hungry young teachers. You have only to read a book or two on psychology and another book or two on pedagogy—enough to learn the shibboleth of the craft—and then go out and ring your bell. Every young teacher will come running.

Just now I can hardly think of anything more inspiring than the sight of an audience of bright, enthusiastic young teachers with note-books in hand and shining faces upturned expectantly to a wise teacher of teachers. But it makes my heart ache when I see the childlike confidence with which thousands of young teachers are

feeding out of the hands of the psychological pretenders and pedagogical smatterers who are ringing their bells all over the land. It makes my heart ache not only because I realize that our hungry young teachers are the hope of the Sunday-school of the future, but because I cannot forget that it is through the neglect of those of us who are older that so many of them are thus unconsciously exposed to peril. We older teachers have not been doing our duty toward the young members of our craft. A master mechanic could not go on with his work for a single moment if the new apprentice at his side were trying to handle his saw wrong end foremost. He would be bound to show him better. But the average seasoned teacher rarely bothers himself about apprentices. The young teacher in the next class may take hold of a pedagogical principle wrong end foremost and blunder with it with the most appalling results, and the older teacher looking on will never so much as venture to suggest that if he will turn that principle around the other way it may work better. He will only say to himself:

"What's the use? These young teachers think they know it all and you can't tell them anything."

Yet if he would think a moment he would

recollect that when he was a young teacher there was nothing he would have been so glad to have as the benefit of an older teacher's advice. I never knew a good mother who could sit by and watch a young thing feed her first baby out of an unsanitary bottle and say nothing. Yet there are good teachers in all our Sunday-schools who can sit by and watch an enthusiastic young teacher do things that are far more dangerous and never even have a desire to tell them better.

Take the case of the teacher in yonder corner who took her first lesson in pedagogy last summer. She got just enough to be able to recognize pedagogy if she should happen upon it in a book, and she went back to her class with the idea that in order to teach pedagogically all one needs to do is to look into one's text-book on pedagogy and see what it says and then do it. And that is what she has been doing ever since. There is not an older teacher in the Sunday-school who does not know that she is failing—failing miserably. And nearly everybody knows why. There is a wise woman who has a class near by. She is one of the best of mothers. When a young mother who lives next door undertook to raise her baby by the book and came near killing it, she felt that it was her duty to put on her hat and go over and tell her a few things.

And she did her duty. She went over and told that distracted young thing that raising a baby by the book may be a good thing, provided one studies one's baby as well as one's book, and provided one remembers that the book was made for the baby and not the baby for the book. Yet it has never occurred to this good woman to go to that poor distracted young teacher and tell her what is the matter. I wonder how many young teachers there are who have ceased to be worth while because no older teacher has taken the trouble to show them that it is just as perilous to try to teach a pupil "by the book" without studying the pupil as it is to try to raise one's baby by the book without studying one's baby.

But this is not the worst. There is the young teacher who has learned a few pedagogical principles and who has been led either through the carelessness or ignorance of an incompetent teacher of pedagogy to convert them into cast-iron rules. One of these is the familiar principle which leads the wise teacher to use every effort to get a pupil to discover a thing for himself rather than point it out to him. Having been told that it is infinitely better for the pupil to make the application of a truth for himself this young teacher has jumped to the conclusion that

the pupil should be left to make the application for himself; and for the last twelve months this has been his rule. To-day he points with pride to the fact that for twelve months he has not made the application of the lesson for his pupils a single time. Now every true, pedagogical teacher knows that this in itself is nothing to be proud of. It may be something to be alarmed about. I should be very proud if I had succeeded in leading my pupils to make the application of every lesson for themselves, but I should feel alarmed for the teacher who could only say that he had never made the application himself. There are hundreds of young teachers who are leading their pupils nowhere because the lessons they teach are never applied and the lessons are never applied because they imagine that the important thing is for the teacher to avoid applying himself. Surely those of us who are older should help the younger members of our craft to escape this illusion. We might at least remind them of the difference between a principle and a cast-iron rule. We might at least let them know that the important thing is to see that the truth is applied. The pedagogical smatterer is content if he avoids applying the teaching himself; the true, pedagogical teacher is not concerned about his pedagogical reputation; he wants to see the

lesson applied, and while his aim is to lead his pupils to apply it he is going to see that it is applied even if he must apply it himself.

Now I am willing to admit that this may not be strictly pedagogical in secular teaching. But there the case is different. If the secular teacher does not succeed in leading a child to discuss a thing or to make an application for himself he can safely wait on the child's growing mind. But in the Sunday-school it is not merely a question of mind. It is a question of the heart also—of a heart that may not be growing, but may be getting harder and darker every day. It is not always an easy matter for a teacher in the public school to lead a child up to the point of discovering for himself a fact or truth, though it may have no bearing upon his spiritual nature or moral conduct; it is sometimes impossible for the wisest teacher in the Sunday-school to lead a pupil up to the point where he may discover for himself a truth which demands hard things of his spiritual nature, or rebukes his moral conduct, and in such cases the teacher must make the application himself or it will go unmade. Children are very much like grown people; they are quick to discover for themselves the truths you are trying to lead them up to where they are applicable to other people and they don't

usually take the trouble to try the lesson on themselves to see if it will fit.

"I've hit that brother at last," said the preacher to himself as the old man in the Amen Corner nodded his head earnestly.

But the old man was saying to himself: "Ain't he giving it to 'em?"

The art of applying the truth to other people is developed at a remarkably early age, and the teacher who always leaves the application to be made by the pupils themselves will find out, if he lives long enough, that children make applications very much as their fathers do.

I wonder how these modern twisters of pedagogical principles into cast-iron rules can look with any degree of complacency upon the great teachers of the past. How scornfully they must look upon dear old Nathan the prophet who was so ignorant of the rules that instead of leaving David to make the application for himself, he rudely pointed his finger at him and cried, "Thou art the man!" How much better it would have been if he had stopped short and gone away and left the truth to percolate down into the poor king's distracted brain! And how strange it must seem to them that our dear Lord Himself, after uttering those beautiful words about the birds of the air and the lilies of the

field, should have made the mistake of applying the truth to His congregation instead of leaving them to make the application for themselves! And then there is that wonderful parable of the Good Samaritan. What a pity that the Master should have spoiled that beautiful picture by adding so prosily: "Go and do thou likewise!"

Let us get this matter straight. Our business as pedagogical teachers is to teach with an aim —an aim that is beyond the lesson itself. The Sunday-school teacher who teaches the lesson with no other view than to teach it—to find a way for it into the minds of his pupils—is in no sense a pedagogical teacher. The pedagogical teacher aims at the child. He does not ignore the lesson, but he does not aim at it: he aims through it. He aims at the development of the child. The Sunday-school aims at the development of the child, not by bringing him in contact with the truth alone, but by bringing him in contact with Him who is Truth. To bring the child to see Jesus he must bring him to see—to really see the truth about Jesus; to see what Jesus did and said and to apply what He did and said to his own heart and life; in a word the teacher must lead the child to realize what the life and teachings of Jesus demand of him, and to accede to that demand.

With this supreme aim in view Sunday-school pedagogy requires that the truth shall not only be taught but applied. It does not say that the pupil should be *left* to make the application for himself. It says that the pupil should be *led* to make the application for himself, which is quite a different matter. Pedagogy teaches, and rightly, that it is infinitely better for the pupil to make the application for himself than to make it for him, and therefore insists that when the truth has been placed before him he shall not be left to make the application for himself, but shall be led up to the point where he can make it for himself and, if possible, kept there until he does make it for himself. But Sunday-school pedagogy goes still further. Sunday-school pedagogy deals not only with the mind of the child, but with his heart also; and if the mind of the child is ready to be led up to the truth and the heart pulls back, then the teacher, rather than allow his efforts to be defeated by the opposition of the child's moral nature, must see that the truth is applied if he has to apply it himself. He must not be quick to apply it himself: that is the easier task and many a teacher hastens to apply it because it is the easier task. He must not apply it until he has exhausted all his resources and there is no longer any ground for hope that

the pupil will apply it for himself; but he must see that it is applied. He must not put it off with the idea that the child will be more likely to apply it when he is older. If a child is allowed to shut his eyes to every duty that he does not choose to see, the day will come when he will see nothing to apply to himself.

VII

MAKING ONE'S TEACHING CONVINCING

MY friend Wilton has an automobile. He also has a chauffeur, for which reason he has never taken the trouble to learn automobiles. The other day he tried to sell his car to Jones. Jones thought he wanted it until Wilton had finished his speech, and then he shook his head. He wanted to be convinced, and he could not be convinced by a man who did not know what he was trying to sell.

The next day Jones bought a car from an agent down-town. You should have heard that salesman's selling talk. When he was through Jones felt that he could almost build a car himself.

When a salesman has mastered his machine his mind is clear and settled, and he is interesting and convincing. The salesman who has not mastered his machine is hazy, and when he talks he only envelops you in fog. You will be afraid to take his machine at any price.

Jones, by the way, is a Sunday-school teacher. If you should drop into a seat near his class some Sunday, you would see half a dozen boys in the near-by classes intently listening to him, to the envy and despair of their own teachers. And if you should listen for a little while, you would understand why. Jones has mastered his subject. I do not merely mean that he has learned his lesson. A teacher may learn his lesson without mastering his subject, just as a trifling salesman learns a few talking points about his automobile without learning automobiles. I mean that he has mastered his general subject, just as a live salesman masters his general subject. You may learn something about every part of an automobile and not know automobiles; your up-to-date salesman learns the general fundamental principles on which automobiles are built, and in mastering these principles he clears up and settles his mind so that he can talk about anything relating to automobiles in general or his own machine in particular in a way that awakens interest and carries conviction. So Jones has mastered the great fundamental truths of religion which lie at the bottom of all Sunday-school lessons, and as a result his mind is as clear as a bell; and when he teaches, whatever the subject may be, all the boys in the neighbour-

hood of his class like to listen. They say: "That old guy knows what he is talking about."

When a live salesman finds that his "selling talk" is not carrying conviction, he does not put the blame on the public. He does not say that if the people were not such idiots and would only sit still and listen he could make them buy. He assumes that the trouble is in himself, and he immediately goes to work to find it. "If my selling talk is not convincing," he says to himself, "it is because I am not convinced, and if I lack conviction, it is because I have not mastered my machine. I am not going to try to sell another machine until I know automobiles." And then he starts a little school all by himself to learn automobiles. He goes at once to the bottom of the matter. "What," he asks, "are the fundamental principles on which automobiles are built?" At first his mind is so hazy that he can see no principles at all; he can only see the things—wheels and tanks and bolts and pipes and wires. But he continues to press the question; and at length the great fundamentals begin to loom up dimly through the mists. Then he fixes his gaze intently upon them one after another, and gradually they come nearer and nearer, until at last they emerge from the fog and stand out sharply defined, as ships against a

clear sky. But this is not all. When these fundamental principles come out of the fog, the fog lifts from his mind, the essentials of a good automobile come in sight, the strong points of his own machine come in sight; then comes conviction, intense conviction, and enthusiasm, burning enthusiasm; and before he is aware he is framing a new selling talk in sentences as clear as diamonds—in short, sharp words that cut clean through with a click like a conductor's puncher.

When a wise teacher finds that his words are not carrying conviction, he pursues the same course. He does not put the blame on his class. He does not conclude that his pupils are blockheads. He assumes that the trouble is in himself, and he loses no time in finding it. He says to himself: "If my teaching is not convincing it is because it does not proceed from conviction; and if I lack conviction, my mind is hazy; and if my mind is hazy, it is because I have not mastered the fundamentals of the religion I am trying to teach." And then he takes up the great fundamental truths of religion one by one and proceeds to think them through to daylight. He goes to the bottom of the matter. He begins with the idea of religion itself. He says to himself: "I claim to be a teacher of religion. Do I

really know what religion is? Have I ever clearly defined it in my own mind?" And if he finds that his mind is hazy on this point, as it is very likely to be when one's teaching is not carrying conviction, he will force the question straight into the fog: "What is this religion I profess to teach?" And he will not rest until he can define it in words that will satisfy his own mind and heart. Probably the first definition that will come to him will be the one that just now lies on the surface of the world's thought. Here is a religious novel that is creating a sensation. Everybody is talking about it. In this book the author tells us that the world is hungry for religion, but what it wants is a religion that will satisfy modern intelligence. "What is there in the Christian religion," he asks, "that an intelligent mind can afford to tie to?" Then he proceeds to argue that if Christianity is to meet the needs of the world to-day the Church must revise its creed to conform to modern intelligence. And so he goes on to the end of his book trying to tell the Church how to give the world a satisfying religion, all on the assumption that religion is a creed.

But the wise teacher will not be quick to accept this definition of religion. He will remember that, while he has known creeds to satisfy a

man's mind, he has never known one to satisfy a man. Moreover, he has learned not to take very seriously the things which lie on the surface of the world's thought. They are too superficial, unripe, sophomoric. He remembers that when he was a brilliant sophomore with an intellectual ambition he decided that what he needed was a wife who could satisfy his intellect, but that later, when he became a man and walked in the light of life, he saw that what he needed was not a wife who could satisfy his mind, but a wife who could satisfy his heart, his essential being. And if he will now look at the matter before him in the light of life, he will see that the world's idea that what a man needs is a religion that satisfies his intellect comes from sophomoric thinking and not from human experience. What a man needs is not a religious creed that will satisfy his mind, but a religion that will satisfy him, his essential being. And he will remember that this the religion of Jesus offers to do and that only the religion of Jesus can do it; because, unlike all other religions, it is not a creed, not a system of thought, not a philosophy, but a life.

A life! A life lived with God! We put ourselves in Christ's hands, and He leads us to the Father and shows us the Father's heart and

brings us into right relations with Him (thereby bringing us into right relations with all His children) and enables us to live with Him as our Father forever. And this life is religion. Oh, how the fog lifts before this wonderful truth! But there are others, and the wise teacher will go on thus from one fundamental truth to another until they all stand out like ships against the sky. And then he will go to his class a new teacher. He will go at white heat; his muscles will be taut with conviction; his heart will be thrilled with enthusiasm, and when he speaks his sentences will be as clear as diamonds, and his words will cut clean through with a click like a conductor's puncher.

VIII

PREPARING TO DO ONE'S BEST WORK

I PUSHED up the car window and wound up my watch and settled myself for my journey. When I reached my destination, the faithful window was still up, but my watch had run ingloriously down. As a piece of mechanism a car window is not to be compared with a watch; but when one mentions sticking qualities, my beautiful chronometer can only blush and hide its face.

Most of us start out in life with the idea that human beings are built on the plan of a car window. We work up our enthusiasm to the highest notch and turn it loose, expecting it to stick; and almost before we can turn around, it is down again. We fire our hearts with holy zeal and imagine they will keep at white heat forever, and the very next morning we open our eyes to a vision of dead ashes on the hearth.

"Last night," said my friend Epicure bitterly, "I worked over my Sunday-school lesson until

I was all on fire with it. I was fairly tingling with desire to teach it. And yet this morning, when I went to my class, my brain was like a lump of dough and my heart was as cold as a clam and I simply could not do anything."

And poor Epicure was in the depths of mingled despair and disgust, as I have been after working for half an hour over a car window that was out of order, vainly trying to make it stick. It seems a pity that the average man must reach the sunny side of forty before he can be convinced that his mechanism is not that of a window but rather of a watch, and that the only way in the world to keep a watch or a man wound up is to keep winding. You cannot wind your watch or your ambition or your enthusiasm or your interest up to a point where it will stick. The moment you let it go it will begin to run down. Let us see what use we can make of this simple fact in our Sunday-school work; that is, in the work of leading our pupils to Christ. For example, let us suppose that this is Saturday night and that you have wound yourself up to the very top notch for to-morrow's lesson. You were never in better shape for your task physically, mentally, or spiritually. You are saying to yourself: "I would give anything in the world if I could go to my class to-morrow feeling as I

do now." Very well. Now put yourself to the test and see just how much you are really willing to give.

You have just risen from your knees, and you are ready for bed. Now go to bed. Don't go down-stairs to the pantry. That is what Epicure did. When he was getting ready for bed, he began to think of his appetite and he became as hungry as a bear. And he went down to the pantry and—ate like a bear. When he woke up the next morning he had that dark brown taste and that dark blue outlook. And when he looked for the fire that was burning so brightly in his heart the night before, he found only dead ashes on the hearth. It is difficult to understand how a sensible man like Epicure could be guilty of such idiocy. What would you think of a general who would work hard all day to prepare for an attack and then, while waiting for the enemy to come, should deliberately drink himself drunk? Why go to the trouble to build a fire if you are going to straightway turn the hose on it? Why should a teacher undertake to master his lesson at all if he is going to allow himself to be mastered by his stomach? Why should a teacher go down on his knees before God and consecrate to Him all his powers for tomorrow's task and then deliberately indulge his

appetite at the risk of putting his powers out of commission for the next twenty-four hours?

Of course there are other ways to put out the fire. A woman can do it by deciding at the last moment to take another look at her hat and spending the next two hours at her mirror in an agonizing effort to make the things on it set at the right angle. If you want to keep yourself wound up, if you want to keep the fire burning, turn resolutely from your late-hour temptations and go to bed. And when you go to bed, turn your thoughts toward Him who giveth His beloved sleep, and go to sleep. If you cannot sleep, don't worry about it. You may do to-morrow's work even if you lie awake all night, provided you do not worry. If you are given to seeing things at night, if the day's worries come crowding round your bed as did the hobgoblins in your childhood, turn your thoughts persistently into pleasant channels. Put your business or domestic cares away in their proper pigeonholes in your brain and lock them up and trust God to take care of them until Monday. No power on earth can keep you wound up for to-morrow's task if you allow your mind to be set upon by such distractions. The important thing is to steer clear of every thought that may lead you down from the high spiritual plane

which you reached in the preparation of your lesson. Keep your thoughts heavenward. Think of the things that are true and just and pure and lovely and of good report. Think of God. Think of Him as your Father. Think of His goodness. Think of His precious Gift. Think of the devotion of Jesus to the Father and to men. Think of the unseen universe. Try to realize its nearness. Try to realize the presence of the Father just as you have tried to realize the presence of the loved one who has passed within the veil. Never mind about your sleep; you will probably be asleep before you have thought of half of these things, and never mind about the lesson; you must not worry your mind over the lesson. All you need to do is to see to it that your last conscious thoughts are on as high a spiritual plane as you want to-morrow's waking thoughts to be. If you run down to a sordid level before you go to sleep, you need not expect to find yourself wound up to a heavenly height when you awake.

If your last thoughts to-night are of God, it will not be a difficult matter to turn your waking thoughts toward Him to-morrow. And this is the most important thing you will have to do before reaching your class; for, as a rule, the key-note of a day is struck at its beginning. The

man who loses his temper before breakfast is not likely to have a heavenly temper the rest of the day. If your thoughts are with the pigs at sunrise, they are not likely to be with the angels at sunset. It is a distressing thing to fall into the mire of worry and fretfulness and scolding and ill-temper before breakfast and have to go to Sunday-school with that soiled feeling. To the angels it must look quite as bad as if one should fall into a mud puddle and soil one's new dress on the way. Turn your waking thoughts toward God and keep out of the mire.

While you are dressing, set your heart to singing. Think of the things you are thankful for until your whole being is suffused with a mellowing sense of gratitude. Gratitude awakens love, and love awakens desire for service. Presently your thoughts will turn toward your pupils and a great and holy ambition to win them for Christ will take possession of you, and you will hasten to get through your toilet that you may have time to look into the lesson again and see if you have so mastered it that you can use it as a magnet to draw your pupils heavenward. But mark! all this winding up of the soul is going to be a failure if you have put off until Sunday morning the hundred and one little personal and domestic

matters that should have been attended to Saturday night. You are not going to Sunday-school with a heart full of love and joy and zeal if you must rush yourself to death, as you so often express it, to get there. Even when everything has been put in order, when every button is in place and you know just where to find the pins and everything else that a mortal needs to make himself worth looking at, one must keep a sharp lookout lest all one's preparation should go for naught. If you lose your collar button, hold fast to your temper. A lost collar button may not spoil the lesson, but a lost temper will. If you must turn the house upside down to find a missing glove, turn it gently. Remember, if everything else goes wrong, you must not go wrong. When you go down to breakfast, go with a heroic indifference to bodily comforts. Other mornings you want your coffee just so and your rolls just so; resolve as you descend the stairs this morning that you are going to find the coffee and rolls just right. Be an optimist. If the coffee is too good, it will tempt you to drink too much; and if the rolls should be burned as black as the kettle, your system probably needs a little charcoal anyway. Whatever happens, keep sweet. And keep calm. When breakfast is over, don't spin around over the house in a

frenzy. Don't leave home in a frantic rush. Possess your nerves if you can; possess your soul anyway and go in peace. And the God of peace will go with you. And if you will continue on your way without stopping to talk with friends, avoiding all interruptions and distractions and keeping your face toward the sun and your heart and mind toward God, you will reach your class in the spirit of one anointed for the King's service. And you will attend to the King's business as a workman that needeth not to be ashamed.

IX

TEACHING CHRIST UNCONSCIOUSLY

NO teacher ever fails to teach a lesson. He may not teach the lesson he intends to teach, but he teaches a lesson. The average teacher thinks he carries one lesson to the class. The wise teacher knows he is carrying two. One he carries in his head; the other —— But let us take a case.

My friend Sharp—I call him Sharp mainly because that is not his name—was unquestionably the best equipped teacher in the Sunday-school. At least so everybody said, and when one wanted to know anything one was always told to ask Mr. Sharp. If Mr. Sharp didn't know it was not knowable. And really it was wonderful what enormous bucketfuls he could draw from the well of human knowledge on a moment's notice. All you had to do was to ask for what you wanted and it came. He knew all the curious facts that a boy likes to read about—all the strange and startling things that send the funny chills chasing one another up and down your

back—and when it came to graver matters, such as the botany of the Bible or its zoology or geography or mineralogy or astronomy, he was a veritable encyclopedia in forty volumes. And what was better, he could tell what he knew. The boys would sit with their elbows on their knees and their chins propped up on their hands, their eyes gazing straight into his.

Mr. Sharp taught twenty years and then died, and when Williams, the banker, who had grown up in his class from his tenth year, saw the announcement of his death in the morning paper, he remarked:

"Bright fellow! Yes, what a remarkably bright fellow he was!" And then he turned to the market reports.

Just across the way from Mr. Sharp's class sat "Miss Jennie." "Miss Jennie" was the short for—well, let us say, Mrs. Jennie Moore. Mrs. Moore kept a Sunday morning menagerie composed of six curious animals commonly known as "bad boys." Not that "Miss Jennie" ever called them "bad boys." Never! She knew boys—she had four of her own—and it was her cherished belief that the difference between the average "bad boy" and the average "nice man" was the difference between a coat turned wrong side out and a coat turned wrong side in.

When a man goes out into the world he is careful to see that his coat is turned wrong side in. A boy is no politician. He doesn't have to. When a boy goes out into the world he likes to shock people by wearing his coat wrong side out If there's any good in a man he is going to let you know it. The moment a boy discovers a good impulse in his own heart he blushes and hastens to hide it.

"Miss Jennie" was not handicapped with the idea that her boys were bad boys; still she was distressingly handicapped. She was not "equipped." The knowledge of her ignorance almost suffocated her. If she only knew what Mr. Sharp knew she might accomplish something, but with more work on her hands at home than two able-bodied women could manage it was useless to hope; she could never have an "equipment." All she could do was to do the best she could and she did it; but it was an uphill job; it was plain that the boys were not interested—were they not always trying to catch something that Mr. Sharp was saying?—and she could not see that she was making any impression upon them.

Yet if "Miss Jennie" should die to-day there are at least six grown-up boys scattered over this continent who would do their best to get

to her funeral. And they would come as to a sacrament; for not only do they love her as they love their own mothers, but they revere her as the angel of their boyhood who appeared to them in the way and took them by the hand and by the gentle compulsion of her beautiful character led them to Christ.

Nobody would have called "Miss Jennie" a well-equipped teacher; yet if we are to judge her work by its results it was a brilliant success, while the work of the "best equipped" teacher in the Sunday-school, measured by the same rule, was a signal failure.

But what is a "best equipped" teacher? A teacher came to me the other day in the depths of despair. She has a class of poor girls from the submerged district, and they are as unpromising a set of giddy simpletons, taken as a whole, as one would care to look upon. She had done her best but in spite of the most earnest and persistent efforts not a girl in the class had shown the slightest progress. Not one would study her lesson. Not one would even attempt to answer a question. She was at her wit's end. She was not equipped for her work and she knew it, and she just did not know what to do. I said to her:

"Do you know that the few moments which those girls spend in your company every week

are the only moments they spend in a pure atmosphere where their souls can get a breathing chance, where they are likely to get a glimpse of high ideals and awaken to a consciousness of a higher life? Do you know that the mere presence of a refined woman whose heart is aglow with the spirit of Christ—perhaps the only example of highly developed womanhood they have ever known—is as a magnet reaching down into the depths of their natures and drawing toward the surface all the submerged good that is in them? Do you know that while you are straining every nerve in your almost hopeless task of opening their minds to the truths of the lesson, the silent influence of your character is at work in their hearts rebuking their sins, awakening in them holy aspirations, and drawing their hearts out toward the Christ upon whom you are depending to transform their lives?"

It is well to be equipped with the means to open up the minds of one's pupils to the truths of the lesson, but is a teacher equipped for his work who has nothing with which to reach his pupil's hearts?

But that question overshoots the mark. For you and I know that every teacher has something with which to reach his pupil's hearts.

And he reaches them. The one fact some of us need to tremble over—rather the one fact we need to face to-day above all others—is that we teachers are reaching our pupils whether we think we are or not. We need to stop short every day in the week and remind ourselves that a teacher always teaches two lessons—the one with his lips, the other with his personality or character. The lesson that goes out from a teacher's lips may fail to reach his pupils' minds in spite of all his efforts, but the silent lesson that goes out from his life and character finds its way to their hearts whether he makes any effort or not. I have said this before, but it cannot be emphasized too often. Teachers are often discouraged over their apparent failure to make any impression upon their pupils. They tell us that John doesn't seem to know any more than he did a year ago. And Henry doesn't seem to grasp anything: anyway nothing sticks; it's like pouring water on a duck's back. But these discouraged teachers are thinking only of the lessons they have been trying to teach with their lips. They never think of the lessons they are teaching with their lives. And because they are not thinking of these things some teachers are teaching things they never dreamed of teaching. This was the secret of Sharp's failure;

he had equipped his mind for his work without giving a thought to the needs of his heart, and the silent lesson that went out from his life was a lesson he never dreamed of teaching. That lesson said to his pupils :

"Here are the facts about the Bible—geographical, historical, botanical, zoological, archæological. As for what are called the great eternal truths of the Bible which are supposed to transform men's lives, you can see that they have not transformed my life, and that I know nothing about them and don't believe in them. Perhaps it is not worth while for you to believe in them either."

X

EXPLAINING SALVATION TO OLDER PUPILS

LEADING a little child to Christ is simply a matter of leading him to know Christ and by the gentle urgings of love getting him to commit himself to Christ. But when a pupil is old enough to realize the power of sin in his own life the process is not so simple. He must be led to realize Christ as his only hope of escaping that power. And that means that he must be led to the truth about Christ as the Saviour of men, and must know just what it means to be saved and what one must do to be saved.

It goes without saying that if we would make all this plain to our pupils we must first see that it is perfectly plain to our own minds. Many a would-be soul-winner goes to wreck just here. He tries to explain a thing which he has never cleared up for himself. The best way to clear up this matter for oneself is to forget one's pu-

pils for a little while and sit down and make a self case of it.

Think of yourself as an unsaved sinner and demand of yourself an answer to the question, "What must I do to be saved?" Then talk the matter over with yourself somewhat in this way:

Religion is a life. To be a Christian is to live the Christian life. To live the Christian life is to live in union with Christ—to have His life flow through us as the life of the vine flows through the branches; in other words to live His life. This is what we call a saved life, or being saved. To be saved means not only to be delivered from the deadly consequences of sin but to be raised from the death of sin to a new life in Christ that is above the power of sin. How can we form this union with Christ that will enable us to live a saved life? What must we do to be saved?

Of course if you want to be saved there are just two things for you to do.

First, you must find a Saviour.

Then you must take that Saviour to be your Saviour.

That is all.

But even these two simple things you cannot do by yourself. You did not even ask this question by yourself. Left to oneself one never asks

a question of this sort. Men are led to ask it. You were led to ask it.

I suppose you have been thinking that somehow you might eventually manage to save yourself. Most of us have thought that way at one time or another. We don't like to admit that there is anything which we cannot do ourselves. That is very manly, in a way, but it is also very foolish, in a way. No man can lift himself by his own boot-straps. And one might as well admit it before he tries it.

And no man can save himself, for the simple reason that you cannot lift yourself above yourself. Think a moment. What do you mean when you say that you want to be saved?

First of all, you want to be saved from the condemnation of Him whom you have so grievously wronged. Deep down in your heart you feel that God condemns you for the way in which you have treated Him; for sinning against Him; for going contrary to His will; for refusing to listen to His voice; for refusing to serve Him; for taking everything He has given you and using it all for yourself and leaving nothing for Him; for doing so many things that were repugnant to Him when you were under obligations to do everything you could to please Him; for rebelling against Him; for refusing to be guided by

Him as your Lord and Master. You feel that He condemns you for these things and you want to be saved from His condemnation. You want to be saved from the Father's disapproval; you want Him to forgive you, and to take you to His bosom and smile upon you and tell you that all is well between you and Him.

Then, too, you want to be saved from sin. You want some One to extricate you from the web that sin has woven about you; to break the power of sin and set you free; to wash sin out of you; to rid you of all your sinful habits and desires, and even to rid you of that soiled feeling which you have on account of your sins.

Also you want to be saved from the destruction that sin works in a man, here and hereafter. Never mind what you may think about future punishment; you are conscious that sin is already working your ruin and that if something is not done you will be ruined forever. And never mind whether you have been an outrageous sinner or not. God tells us that He put you here as a man plants a vine in his vineyard; that He has done everything for you that could be done to make you fruitful in good things; and that if you have failed to meet His expectations, if your life has not been fruitful in good, you are a failure, and you don't deserve any-

thing more than your grape-vine would deserve if after all the care it has received at your hands it should bring forth nothing but wild grapes.

You want to be saved from the ruin that overtakes the vine that fails to meet the expectations of its owner.

And you want not only to be saved from evil and put out of harm's way, but you want to be saved in the arms of Him who has your future in His keeping and who can keep you safe forever.

But that is not all: you want to be saved for something. You want to be saved for service. You want to be a living sacrifice in the service of God and your fellow-men.

Now let me ask you in all candour, if you really need all these things, is it worth while, think you, to depend upon yourself to save yourself? Don't you think you need a Saviour? And don't you think you need an all-powerful Saviour?

Have you noticed that your Bible does not stop for a moment to argue this question with you? "Do you want to be saved?"—this is its word to you,—"then here is a Saviour; the only Saviour, your only hope; believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved."

Who is the Lord Jesus Christ?

He is the Saviour whom God has provided for men.

"God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life" (John 3 : 16).

And what does it mean to believe in Him?

It means to believe that He is the Saviour whom God appointed to save men; that He is a divine Saviour having all the power of God Himself; that in a sense which we cannot understand He is one with God—is God Himself; the God who made you and who perfectly understands your case and is able to save you unto the uttermost (Heb. 7 : 25), and that He loves you with an infinite love and therefore is ready and anxious to save you.

It means to believe all this so thoroughly that you are constrained to accept Him as your Saviour and to put yourself absolutely in His hands to save you. If you thus believe in Him you will "not perish but have everlasting life."

"But how does He save me?"

I don't know. I know that when He died on the cross He in some sense took the place of sinners—of you and me. He stood up in my stead. He thrust Himself in between me and the descending rod. Don't misunderstand me. I have not in my mind that awful picture which men used to see of an angry God raising the

lash against His rebellious subjects, and the Son of God rushing in and taking the blows upon His own back. I cannot accept that picture for it makes the Father and the Son wholly unlike, and I know that they are one. But it is plain to me that men brought death upon themselves by their sins and that God Himself in the person of His Son threw Himself into the breach—took it upon Himself to suffer for us, so that if we would accept Him as suffering in our stead we "should not perish but have everlasting life." I cannot understand it, but I would not reject it on that account, for if I should it would only make life a greater mystery. I may not be able to explain Calvary, but without Calvary I cannot explain anything.

But it is not necessary for me to understand how Jesus saves me, any more than it is necessary for me to understand how my doctor cures me. It is only necessary for me to put myself in His hands and let Him save me.

"But am I not required to obey Him?"

Certainly; but that follows as a matter of course. You cannot put yourself in His hands and not obey Him any more than you can put yourself in your doctor's hands and not obey him. If you really trust your case with your doctor you will follow his instructions. And if

you really accept Jesus as your Saviour you will also accept Him as your Lord, your Master, and follow His instructions.

"But does not the Bible tell me I must repent?"

Yes, and doubtless you have already repented or you would not be so deeply concerned about being saved. Certainly if you have come to see what a terrible thing sin is, and how you have wronged God by your sin, you have repented. You are sincerely sorry and you are determined never to treat God that way again. That is repentance.

As I said at the beginning, there are just two things you must do—find a Saviour and take Him for your Saviour. Now God has pointed out to you a Saviour. He is the only Saviour. And He is an all-sufficient Saviour. The Bible tells you that. Millions of saved men and women will tell you that. God's spirit now at work in your heart tells you that. Very well then:

Take Him to be your Saviour.

Put yourself in His hands and let Him save you. Do you ask how you can put yourself in His hands? Go to Him. Tell Him about yourself. He knows, but tell Him. Tell Him about your sins. Tell Him how you have wronged Him. Ask Him to forgive you. Remember His

words: "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out" (John 6:37). Tell Him that you are utterly unable to save yourself and that He is your only hope, and you have accepted His invitation and come to put yourself entirely in His hands. And tell Him that you are ready to devote your whole life to Him—to serve Him heroically; to work and suffer and, if need be, die in His service.

If you were desperately ill and you believed your physician could save you, you would say to him: "I put myself in your hands; I am going to look to you and to you alone, and I am going to obey you implicitly." Now, say that to God.

And be sure that you do what you say you are going to do.

Sometimes a patient tells a doctor that he has put his case in his hands, and then refuses to follow the doctor's instructions. And sometimes a poor sinner tells God he has put his case in His hands and then refuses to obey Him. Don't deceive yourself. Say to Him: "Lord, from this moment Thou shalt have all there is of me. I belong to Thee and nothing that Thou dost require of me will I deny Thee. Lord, Thou hast all there is of me. I am Thine and Thy will is mine forever."

And when you have thus thrown yourself

upon Him and put your salvation and yourself in His hands forever, rise from your knees and without waiting for anything to happen—without watching for strange sensations or supernatural visions—go straight forward and do the things that God wants you to do—the things your conscience and your Bible tell you to do. Treat Him exactly as you would treat the doctor in whom you have implicit confidence. Don't worry. Don't stop and wonder if you have made a mistake. Trust Him and obey Him and the Great Physician will heal you. However bad your condition, if you will trust Him and do as He bids you He will rid you of all moral disease; for—

"He cleanseth us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9).

The teacher who will take the trouble to thrash out this whole question in this way will not need to be told how he should go about making it plain to his pupils. He will not know how to make it plain to very young pupils, who cannot appreciate the question and therefore could not understand the answer, but he will know how to satisfy the mind of the big boy or girl whose heart is crying for the answer and must have it.

XI

HELPING THE PUPIL TO ACCEPT CHRIST

NOW and then we are told that when the teacher has succeeded in getting before his pupils a clear picture of Jesus as the Saviour and Lord of men and has plainly shown them their need of Him his work is done; the pupil must do the rest, and it would be unpedagogical to encroach upon the pupil's province. But there is a practical objection to this theory which we can hardly afford to overlook, and that is that where teachers have put it into practice the pupils are no longer coming to Christ. This is a painful thing to say, but we might as well face the truth. One of the most distressing facts in recent Sunday-school history is the steady decline of conversions in a large number of the Sunday-schools that have been modernized and placed upon what is popularly supposed to be a pedagogical basis. I do not, of course, refer to those schools in which the teaching is really pedagogical, but to those which have fallen victims to certain popular vagaries which pedagogical smatterers have mis-

taken for pedagogy. In some schools teachers have practically ceased to report conversions since they began to be "pedagogical." This, of course, is not because pedagogy stops conversions —true pedagogy should largely increase the number of conversions,—but because some vagaries which these teachers have mistaken for pedagogy could stop anything.

Again we are sometimes told that to go further after presenting the truth is to encroach upon the province of the Holy Spirit, and that we must beware of encroaching upon the province of the Holy Spirit. This has a frightful sound, but I have never known a teacher who needed such a warning. We are in no danger of encroaching upon the Holy Spirit's work—not, at least, until we have finished our own work, and it can hardly be said that the end of our own task is in sight. We may be in danger after we have used up all our own opportunities, but if we have gone no further than to lay the truth before our pupils we can hardly say that we have gone to the limit of our opportunities. Sometimes when we are cast down somebody tries to cheer us by reminding us that, having taught our pupils about Christ to the best of our ability, there is nothing more we can do but pray and wait; but there is poor consolation in

being told that we have nothing worth using in Christ's service except the ability to tell our pupils about Christ. Besides, deep down in our hearts we know that we have not done all that we can do. If I should set a dinner before an invalid child and tell him that he needs to eat it and then leave him, I could not convince myself that I had done my best to get him to eat it. I would remember that I have at least a little common sense, a little ingenuity, a little knowledge of human nature, a little gift of persuasive speech—all of which I would have to use, together with the child's love for me and my love for him, before I could conscientiously say that I had done my best. How can I say that I have done my best to lead my pupils to Christ if I have simply presented Christ to them and assured them of their need of Him?

But let us come down to particulars. What can we do? Assuming that we have faithfully and clearly taught our pupils all that they need to know about Christ, what else can we do? What can we do in the class? We know some things which we should not do. For instance, we know that we should not talk with Tom about his soul in the presence of Dick and Harry; but what can we do?

It cannot be denied that the class offers very

few opportunities for soul-winning which the teacher who is not deeply concerned about his pupils is apt to recognize. Indeed, unless one's love for Christ and for one's pupils amounts to a real passion, one is not likely to find any opportunities at all. Most of the opportunities that come to us in the class are so small that only the eyes that have been made keen by love can see them. If I go to my class with nothing to stir me other than a mere intellectual interest in the lesson, I will think it absurd that one should attempt to win a soul for Christ in an assembled class; but if my heart is at white heat, if I have been thinking and praying about Dick and Tom and Harry until I feel that I would rather win those boys for Christ than conquer a world, I will begin to see opportunities to lead them toward Christ the moment I look into their eyes. I will not drop into my seat with a simple "Good-morning, boys." I will shake hands with Tom, and my hand touch will have an invitation to Christ in it. I will look him straight in the eyes in a way that will let him see straight down into my heart, and what he sees there will be another invitation to Christ. I will manage to have a little word with him about his own affairs. And it will be just between ourselves. In many little ways I will cultivate confidential relations with

him. And I will treat Dick and Harry in the same way. When the lesson begins I will try to ask questions which, without betraying their confidences and without seeming to be personal, will be aimed straight at their hearts and will bring them face to face with Christ and their need of Christ and their duty to Christ. And at the close I will probably have a story to tell about a heroic boy who came to himself one day and saw his duty to Christ and, like a man, went and did it and, because he was brave and true to God and to himself, grew to be a mighty force for good among his fellow-men. And all through the hour my passion for Christ and for my boys will keep me so alert that if Tom, who has been resisting an inward prompting to give himself to Christ, should weaken just a little I shall instantly divine it; and I shall have the common sense to see that the thing for me to do as we are leaving Sunday-school is to make a private engagement with him for a stroll in the woods that very afternoon.

If the fire begins to spread I will ask my pupils the following Sunday morning to come to my house that afternoon. Or, if I have a private class-room, I will have Dick lock the door to secure ourselves from interruption; and then we will get close together, and I will be brave

enough to suggest that now is the time to settle this matter once for all. We should cast ourselves at His feet and we should do it now. If I discover that I have not succeeded in getting them all close together, if some are out of sympathy with the rest and disposed to mock, I will not go so far; but I will ask the superintendent to call the teachers together to consider the advisability of holding an evangelistic service. And when the teachers come together, I will try to set their hearts on fire by showing them what is in my own.

But is this all we can do? Have I not left out the most important thing? Have I not left out prayer? No. I have written this message to little purpose if every step I have suggested does not suggest the necessity of prayer. I know of nothing in the program of soul-winning that can be done, or, at any rate, that will be successfully done by a teacher who does not live in an atmosphere of prayer. I know of no soul-winner to whom prayer is not as natural as breathing. I know of no really successful Sunday-school teacher to whom prayer is not as natural as breathing. One cannot teach Christ whose heart is not continually going out to Christ. One cannot show a child the Father unless his heart is continually crying out, "Father!"

Yet while prayer is essential to the teacher in all his work of soul-winning I hesitate to tell a teacher that the most important thing he can do is to pray. I hesitate because it is so easy to convey the impression that praying is one of the duties we have to perform—one of the jobs that a teacher has to do in the big job of soul-winning. Praying for our pupils will amount to nothing if we go to our knees to pray simply as a part of our job. It is something we must do without regard to our job—just as breathing is something we must do without regard to our job. In other words praying is not an artificial thing, not a part we must play as a part of our program, but something that we do regardless of our program. We are not to go to our knees with our class roll to pray for each pupil with the thought that it is one of the things we must do to bring about the conversion of our children: we must go to our knees because our love for them and for Christ impels us. Do I mean that we should not pray for them except when our love impels us? No: we should pray anyway; but in the meantime we should be looking after our love. In other words, instead of concerning ourselves about whether we are praying as we ought, we should concern ourselves about the matter of opening our hearts to a love that will

impel us—that will even compel us to pray as we ought.

When once that love possesses us we shall be in no danger of falling under the illusion that praying is something we can do as a substitute for work. We shall not say, "I can't do anything for my pupils except pray for them." We shall find work to do and we shall pray while we work, just as we breathe while we work.

XII

THE MOMENT OF DECISION

MANY teachers get along fairly well in the task of leading their pupils to Christ until they approach the critical moment of decision and then they throw up their hands. The main reason why so many fail at this point is that in all critical moments one is thrown largely upon one's own resources, and the average teacher is not given to depending upon his own resources. The average teacher does not make his own plans: he works according to the specific directions he has received from others; and there are no specific directions for a crisis. Every crisis demands a special program and the program must be largely made on the spot. No teacher, however wise or successful he may be, can tell us just what we should say when the time comes to lead Tom, Dick or Harry to decide for Christ. The little speech that led Mary to her decision falls flat when tried on Tom. It would probably have fallen flat upon Mary if it had been tried when she was in a different mood.

But while this is true it does not follow that the failure of the average teacher at this point is inevitable. To be thrown largely upon one's own resources does not mean to be denied help; it only means to be placed where nobody can do our work for us. If we stand still we shall be indeed left to ourselves, but the moment we take up our task and begin to make the most of our resources, as if we were dependent wholly upon ourselves, the Holy Spirit will come to our help. Moreover when we begin to look into our resources we shall find that we already have at hand all the guiding principles that we need for the preparation of a program of our own. This means of course that when we fail at the critical moment we fail not for want of the help we need, but because we fail to make use of the help at hand and thus open the way for the reinforcements that are ready to come to us the moment we advance.

I have said that we cannot make Christians of our pupils simply by teaching them about Christ. We must take them by the hand and lead them to Christ. We must not pull them nor push them; nevertheless we must lead them. And we must lead them by the hand. That is, we must draw them toward Christ by the gentle urging of love. It is important to remember

that phrase—the gentle urging of love. That is about the only kind of pressure that is at once safe and effective at such a time. Other kinds, especially those most commonly used, such as importunity and servile entreaty, are neither safe nor effective. Importunity has accomplished many things, but has never led a child to decide for Christ. It may lead a child to say he will decide for Christ, but that is a different matter. Our importunity does not move him to decide for Christ; it only makes him decide to do anything that may be necessary to get rid of us. As for servile entreaty I can hardly conceive of a greater blunder. When we go down on our knees before a child, either literally or figuratively, we do not draw him forward; we only tempt him to draw back. We can safely entreat or implore one who occupies a position above us, but we cannot safely assume the attitude of a beggar toward one who occupies a position below us. The reason for this is easily found in our own hearts. If a superior goes down upon his knees before us the tyrant that is in us tempts us to put our feet upon him. However meek we may be in an inferior position, we never find ourselves placed above a superior that we are not tempted to tyrannize over him. And we usually yield to the temptation. The moment a teacher

puts himself in the attitude of a beggar before his pupils the little tyrant that is in their hearts rises to the throne and the teacher's influence is gone. I would tell my pupils that the time has come to decide for Christ, and I would try to set before them a picture of Christ that would draw them, and I would do it at a moment when my heart was in such a flame of passion for them and for Christ that my love would also draw them; but I would look to the Holy Spirit for the rest: under no circumstances would I say to them, "Please, please do; for mother's sake, for my sake, please decide for Christ to-day." Even if it failed to awaken the little tyrant in their hearts it could not possibly do any good. Begging never yet opened a human heart, either to Christ or to anybody else. We may get a child to join the church by begging, but we cannot get him to open his heart to Christ. Children's hearts are just like ours. Nobody can persuade us to open our hearts to Christ by appealing to us: he must hold up before us a Christ that will appeal to us. Our pupils can be persuaded to do many things for our sake, or for mother's sake, or for the sake of the class, but they will not open their hearts for the sake of anybody or anything. The heart opens only to that which appeals to it, and our success in win-

ning our pupils for Christ depends not upon our eloquence or persistence as beggars, but rather upon our ability to present Christ to them in a way that will pull upon their heart-strings.

In presenting Christ for immediate acceptance it is important that we should not attempt to give a complete picture of Him (which would be likely to confuse the pupils' minds, or at best leave but a faint or blurred impression), but should fix the gaze of the pupils upon the one thing in Christ that appeals most strongly to children of their age. In presenting Him to children of ten and under I should try to fix their gaze upon His great loving heart, especially as it goes out with tenderness toward little children. In other words I should try to get them to open their hearts to Christ just as I would try to get an orphan child to open his heart to his new foster mother. I would not undertake to tell an orphan everything I know about the good woman who has chosen him for her child: I would only tell him about her wonderful love and especially her love for little children.

In presenting Christ to a pupil of twelve or thirteen, I should emphasize Christ's love, but I should emphasize it largely as a saving love. At that age a child has been struggling with sin long enough to realize something of its power

and something of his own weakness in the presence of temptation, and the picture of a loving Friend and Saviour who sympathizes with him in his temptations and who came to help him win the victory over them, will appeal to him more powerfully than any other picture of Christ that could be set before him.

At fifteen our boys and girls have come under the charm of the heroic, and Christ should be presented to them not merely as a loving Saviour, but as a loving, heroic Saviour. This is not an easy task for the reason that the average child has been brought up on pictures of Christ that are utterly unheroic. Elsewhere[1] I have referred to these strange pictures and to the equally strange ideals which have been developed from them. As I have there said, for a hundred years and more millions of people have been thinking of Jesus as a dear, saintly, harmless soul, of quiet mien and gentle speech, who likes to think up kind things to say about the devil and who never protests against anything except the cruel custom of killing flies. Yet the Christ of history was the bravest fighter the world has ever known. I do not say He was not gentle and kind and tender-hearted. I have seen some kind and tender-hearted women who were tremendous

[1] "What Did Jesus Really Teach About War?" (Revell).

fighters. And Jesus, though the gentlest and kindest and most tender-hearted of men, was a tremendous fighter.

I do not like to think of Him as a warrior, but He began His life-work by declaring war against the literalists, and He fought them until His back was against the cross. There are glimpses of this war all the way through the gospel story. We know how it came about. He had come on the most heroic mission the world ever heard of. He had come to rescue men from the depths of sin and to lift them up into the kingdom of God where they might achieve their divine destiny as sons of God. He had found His own people in double bondage. They were bound not only by sin but by tyrants. We usually think of them as being in bondage to Rome; but the yoke which Rome had put upon them was a trifle compared with that which had been bound upon them by their own teachers.

When a religious teacher has nothing left but the letter of the law he usually develops an extraordinary zeal for it, and this invariably makes him a tyrant. And the rabbis, with certain notable and noble exceptions, had become tyrants, and when Jesus came they were leading the people about like dumb oxen. And they were leading them in utter darkness. They had

put out the lamp which heaven had let down to them. They had made the truth of God a lie.

It was plain to Jesus that He could never reach the chains of sin which bound His people's hearts until He had broken the chains of tyranny which bound their minds, and the moment He succeeded in winning the ear of the people He set to work to rescue them from their tyrants. And then the war began. It was a bloodless fight until just before the end, but it was one of the fiercest fights the world has ever seen. We like to think of those wonderful years as beautiful years in which the Prince of Peace went softly about in the holy calm of vespers, cooling fevered brows, healing broken hearts and blessing little children. But the ministry of Jesus was not like that. It was rather like the fiery trial of a man whose house is beset by a pack of wolves, and who is trying to feed his hungry children and save them from the hungry beasts at the same time. How strange that we should have put aside all those wonderful pictures of Christ the Hero throwing Himself into the breach for His oppressed people, and have chosen to remember Him only as He looked in the midst of His tender ministrations of mercy to the needy! How strange that we should have forgotten those terrible moments of single-

handed conflict with that hungry pack of wolves, the tyrannical Pharisees, who through all His ministry were either hanging upon the outskirts of the crowd or howling at His heels!

But is there not some mistake? Are we not plainly taught that Jesus was a non-resister? Did He not say, "Resist not evil"? And isn't that sweeping enough? Let us look at this matter a moment. Taken apart from its surroundings and taken literally this solemn command of Jesus unquestionably teaches non-resistance. Taken literally it means that it is the duty of Christians to sit down and fold their hands and submit without protest of any sort to every evil thing that may come upon them, including burglars, impostors, grafters, impecunious friends seeking another loan, saloon-keepers soliciting our votes and (incidentally) our boys, merciless automobilists, tainted meats, weeds in the corn, mosquitoes, pirates, pestilence and war. Taken literally it means that if we want to be true followers of Jesus we must stop trying to follow in His steps (for we cannot follow Him without His own heroic spirit) and sneak off to some secluded spot where there is no fighting to do and where piously inclined souls can spend their days in such harmless and comforting diversions as singing Psalms and playing peeka-

boo with the children. Taken literally it means that the ideal hero of the kingdom of heaven is not the Man of Galilee, but that big, fat, blubbering non-resister whom I found one day lying in the street with a little game rascal perched upon his stomach. Taken literally it means that we should not try to be like the Master, for He was the greatest resister of evil the world has ever seen. He came into the world to rescue men from their worst enemies and He fought to the last. But it is evident that we cannot take that saying by itself. We must ask what Jesus was talking about. And when we have looked into the matter we shall find that He was talking about the very same thing He was discussing when He commanded us to turn the other cheek. He was talking about that abominable spirit of retaliation, and He was saying that a man has no right to do anything—not even to resist evil —in a spirit of revenge.

The world has utterly mistaken the spirit of Jesus. He was indeed a non-resister in the matter of rights—He would not lift His finger in behalf of His own rights if they did not involve the right—but He never gave an inch in a matter of right. He was the world's greatest fighter in behalf of the right. It is true that He was meek and lowly in heart, but He was not weak and

lowly in heart. The world never made a bigger blunder about Christ than when it mistook His meekness for weakness. The Master was meek and lowly, not as a weakling but as a hero. All heroes are meek and lowly. We never meet a great hero that we are not amazed at his meekness and lowliness. We wonder that he does not bluster a bit; that he doesn't walk around with a chip on his shoulder; that he is not self-assertive; that he doesn't even seem to know that he is a hero. A boy in my town jumped into the river and saved a little fellow from drowning. The gathering crowd began to applaud and he ran off to hide and did not stop until he got home, a mile and a half away. And then he forgot to mention it to his mother! He didn't know he had done anything worth mentioning. That was the meekness of heroism. And that was the meekness of Jesus.

Jesus is the Supreme Hero of heaven and earth, and if we want our boys and girls who have come under the charm of the heroic life to open their hearts to Him we must present Him to them as the Supreme Hero—the Hero who came into the world to save them at the cost of His own life.

It ought to go without saying that our pupils are not going to decide for Christ until they

know what deciding for Christ means, but somehow it does not. For some reason the average teacher is still urging his pupils to decide for Christ without taking the pains to explain what it means, or even without questioning them to find out what they think it means. Yet it is probably safe to say that the average young pupil's idea of deciding for Christ is not much nearer the truth than that of the little girl who was distressed when her teacher told her that she must give her heart to Christ, because she could not see how she could take out her heart to give to Him and keep on living!

Of course deciding for Christ does not mean the same thing for all ages. In the case of a child of nine or ten it is a very simple matter, and as I have intimated, may be easily explained by comparing it with the case of an orphan child who is asked to accept a good woman as a foster mother. If I were teaching young children I would ask them to imagine that they were orphans and that a beautiful woman with a big loving heart had come to ask them to be her children. What would it mean for them to accept her as their mother? "If you gave yourself to her," I might say, "wouldn't you belong to her? And what would that mean? What would it mean to be her little girl? Very well:

then what would it mean to become Christ's little girl? What would He expect of you?"

This of course would bring out the requirements of love, obedience and trust, and that is as far as I would go. In the case of children of twelve or thirteen I would have to go further: I would have to explain that deciding for Christ means not only giving ourselves to Him to love and obey Him as His own, but putting into His hands the whole matter of our salvation; and I would have to tell them that trusting ourselves in Christ's hands as our Saviour means trusting Him not only for future salvation but for present salvation. We are to look to Him to save us now; to rescue us from the slavery of sin, to cleanse us from all sin and to help us overcome our temptations and thereby keep us clean. Usually I would lead up to this picture by saying something in an intimate, confidential way that would bring forcibly to the mind of each pupil the almost hopeless struggle he has been having with his own temptations. In other words, before picturing Christ as the one being who can save us from our sins, I would try to awaken in their minds a fresh sense of their need of such a Saviour.

In the case of a boy or girl of fifteen, deciding for Christ should be explained as accepting

Christ not only as one's Saviour and Master, but also as one's Leader or Pattern. It means not only trusting and loving and obeying Christ, but it means following in Christ's footsteps; living His heroic life; pursuing His heroic aims and ideals; taking one's life in one's hands and going forth to do one's utmost for the Father and for fellow men.

XIII

GETTING CLOSE TO ONE'S PUPILS IN THE CLASS

"IF I had only known then what I know now! If somebody had only told me at the beginning and saved me all these years of horrible blundering!"

It is an old story. To those of us who live close to the hearts of men, as most earnest teachers do, it is a very old story. There is so much needless suffering in the world—needless suffering from needless blundering, from needless neglect by those who could have helped!

Take the case of, let us say, our friend Joe Jones across the street. Poor Jones was born with "nerves" and a marvellous boiler for brewing bad temper. From childhood when he opened his eyes in the morning the first thing he would see would be something to get hot about, and instantly he would begin to fire up his boiler. By the time he got down-stairs to breakfast he was ready to burst. Never did a boy have better intentions than Joe. Never did a mother have

better intentions than Joe's mother when she soundly berated him at the breakfast table for letting his temper get the better of him. Never did a teacher have better intentions than Joe's teacher when he said to himself one Sunday—he was thinking of Joe's infirmity—that a teacher's business is to stick to the lesson. Joe's teacher had had trouble with a temper of his own and he had learned some things that had helped him, and he might have helped Joe; but he stuck to the lesson instead and Joe grew to manhood and no helping hand was held out to him. And to-day—well, one can hardly believe what a boy with good intentions and a bad temper can come to when people who have had tempers of their own to manage sit by and do nothing.

Unquestionably it is the teacher's business to stick to the lesson. But just as unquestionably it is the teacher's business to stick to his pupil, and whether the lesson Joe Jones's teacher had to teach was about Noah or Jonah or Paul, it was always for Joe Jones, and it was the teacher's business to teach it with a view to the present and future well-being of Joe Jones. It was not his business to stick to his lesson alone; it was his business to stick to the lesson and Joe Jones.

If he had done this he would have seen that there was something in the lesson that was par-

ticularly adapted to Joe Jones's needs, and if he had kept a close watch he would have found in the lessons of a year or two opportunities to unfold to Joe Jones pretty much everything a young fellow who wants to be a Christian or who is trying to be a Christian needs to know. Moreover, if he had stuck to Joe Jones as well as to his lesson he would not only have studied his lesson and Joe Jones together, but he would have studied them both in the light of his own experience. He would have said: "Here is this trouble of Joe's. It must be remedied or his future will be ruined. A boy can't be a Christian and a brewer of bad temper, too. Now let me see how it was with me when I was a boy."

When a teacher thus begins to study his lessons and his pupils in the light of his own experience something happens. Something that has stood between his pupils and himself suddenly disappears and he finds himself leaning toward them and gazing down into their souls with an intensely human, sympathetic gaze. And his pupils look into his eyes and say to themselves, "He's no old guy any more; he's one of us." And presently they are saying one to another: "He doesn't talk out of a book any more. He knows what he's talking about." And then something else happens. When a

teacher begins to look down into the souls of his pupils with an intensely human gaze and his pupils begin to look up into his eyes as one who is one of them and who knows, something else happens. If he knows Christ something else is sure to happen.

If we are going to lead our pupils to Christ we must get close to them by showing a real interest in their welfare. And we must do this in the class as well as outside of it. Think a moment. How many little practical secrets of every-day Christian living have we in our possession that have been of incalculable value to us? How many things have we learned by bitter experience that are saving us many blunders and might save others as many more? If we should spend an hour setting these things down on paper, I think some of us would be amazed at the result. Take, for example, the little secrets which many of us have learned in our struggles with our own "nerves." The first thing we learned was that it is needless to look to Christ for power to conquer a bad temper if we neglect to make use of the weapons He has already given us. If we give a beggar a bag of flour and she leaves it at home on the shelf and comes back to beg for baked bread, she will beg in vain, and if God has given us certain means to use in over-

coming evil temper and we ignore them and go back and beg Him to overcome it "just so," we too shall beg in vain. The next thing we learned was that the direction one's thoughts take on waking in the morning usually determines the tendency of one's thoughts throughout the day. If we begin with selfish thoughts our minds will likely run in a selfish direction all the day. If we turn our first thoughts toward God our minds will likely have an upward tendency through the day. And so we undertook to turn our waking thoughts toward God. If we could begin the day thinking of God we were not likely to lose our temper at the breakfast table.

By and by came another secret. We had a hard time with our waking thoughts. We would wake up thinking of almost everything except God. By and by we learned that one's waking thoughts in the morning may be influenced by one's last thoughts at night. We could easily control our last thoughts at night, and so every night we went to sleep thinking of God. And soon to our joy we found that our thoughts of God would linger around while we were asleep, and would be on hand the moment we woke up. A little later we learned that if we would overcome our "nerves" through the day we must not only send our waking thoughts upward, but

we must also send our waking hearts upward. And so we formed the habit of thinking about God in ways that warm the heart. Every morning we began by thinking of His loving care and we would think until our hearts overflowed with gratitude and praise.

And thus we went on discovering one secret after another until we had dozens of them—all little things, but so precious that we would not have taken the world for them. And we would not take the world for them to-day.

Now the question comes home to our hearts: Why should we not share these priceless secrets with our pupils? Why should we not "connect up" our lesson with their daily needs and thus show that we really care for them? Once we were where they are to-day. All the little practical secrets of victorious Christian living which victorious Christians treasure so highly were unknown to us. Many a time since then as we have looked back through our years of blundering and suffering we have said that we would have given the world if somebody had only told us. We don't want our pupils to blunder and suffer as we have blundered and suffered. We don't want our pupils to say a dozen years from to-day, "If my teacher had only been interested in me enough to tell me!"

XIV

THE CORE OF THE MATTER

I HAVE been thinking of what the average reader who has followed me thus far would be likely to say if my message should end just here. Frankly I do not believe he would say anything that would assure me that my effort was worth while. In all probability it would be something like —

"Yes, I think I can see how it is done, but ——"

And there it would stop.

That at any rate is what we usually say nowadays when we come to the end of a book that tells us nothing more than how to do things. In an age that is obsessed with the notion that knowledge is power, when we get nothing more than the knowledge we ask for, we close our book with a "but" and a sigh and that's the end of it.

This is the secret of the failure of a multitude of young Sunday-school teachers to-day. They

start out under the illusion that all they need to make them successful teachers is to be told how to do it, and they go to their task as confident as little children that when they have once mastered all the rules of pedagogy and all the most up-to-date methods they will begin to be successful teachers. And when they have read all the books in the teacher's course and filled an armful of note-books with training school lectures, they lay them all on the shelf with a "but" and a sigh and that's the end of it.

Youth would not be youth without its fond fancies, and I should not like to see even a young Sunday-school teacher deprived of all of his precious illusions at once; but there is one illusion which he must get rid of before he can accomplish anything worth while, and that is this excessively youthful notion that knowledge is power. Knowledge is not power, either in the Sunday-school or out of it. All the knowledge in the world alone will not make an efficient Sunday-school teacher—that is, a teacher who can lead his pupils to Christ. No amount of training can do it. No amount of material or intellectual equipment can do it. You may build your locomotive by the latest pattern, and you may furnish it with the most complete equipment in the world, and it will not budge an inch

toward its destination. However up-to-date and complete it may be it is not going to do the work it was designed to do until there is steam in the boiler and an engineer in the cab. In other words it must have something to make it go and it must have a vision. So with the Sunday-school teacher. I have said that winning one's pupils for Christ requires not only love but an intelligent love. This means that it requires not only the heat of a great passion but the vision of a great passion. I care not how much we may learn about the art of leading our pupils to Christ, we are not going to lead them to Christ until we have a clear vision of Christ, a vision that will kindle an intelligent love for Christ, that will deepen our convictions about Christ and His truth, and that will give us a clear conception and a just appreciation of our soul-winning task.

This is the very core of the matter. The difference between a soul-winning teacher and a teacher who is not winning souls is a matter of vision. A soul-winning teacher may lack many things in equipment, but you will never find him lacking in vision. There is no vagueness in his mind about Christ or the fundamental truths of Christ's Gospel. He has tremendous convictions about fundamental things. He never questions

whether Tom is a spirit or only a splendid little animal with a thinking machine attachment. And having no doubt on that point it never occurs to him to ask whether the aims and methods of the Sunday-school should be the same as the aims and methods of the public school. In the light of the face of Christ he has looked through the splendid little animal that people call Tom down into the depths of his soul and he has found the real Tom. And there is no room for doubt: he *knows*. He knows that while that splendid little animal is the torment of the class, Tom—the real Tom—is a spirit made in the image of the Eternal Spirit; and he knows that Christ is Tom's supreme need; and he knows that the task of leading Tom to Christ is as big and noble a thing as God ever gave a human being to do.

We are not going to do anything worth while in the Sunday-school until we realize that the Sunday-school is worth while, and we are not going to realize that it is worth while until we get a vision of Christ that will enable us to see what a big and noble thing He has set for the Sunday-school teacher to do. Without that vision we may become the best equipped and the most up-to-date teachers in the world, but we shall never see anything higher than public school ideals to aim at, and we shall never lead

our pupils to anything higher than they may reach in a public school conducted by teachers of high character. Certainly we shall never lead them to Christ.

This vision will come to us when we have given our eyes, along with everything else we have, to Christ; but it is not going to stay with us if we do nothing to keep it with us. We have got to keep our eyes open to it. And to keep our eyes open to it we have got to make use of our minds. We have got to take time to think now and then of the things that our vision of Christ reveals to us.

The deepest convictions eventually pass away if we do not occasionally recall them and give expression to them. That is the trouble with many a teacher who has ceased to win souls: he has allowed his vision of Christ to pass away and all his deep religious convictions have gone with it. What many of us need to do most of all to-day is to strengthen our religious convictions. Not our convictions about the things we don't believe, but our convictions about things we do believe. The more we think of what we don't believe the less we are going to believe. The more we think of what we do believe the more we are going to believe.

Soul-winning teachers go to their task with

tremendous convictions and they take care of their convictions. One of the best ways to strengthen one's convictions is to spend a quiet hour now and then in uttering them out loud to one's own heart. It is not a difficult matter: all you have to do is to ask yourself what you really believe and then put your beliefs into words and utter them to your heart. Utter them as solemnly and emphatically as you would confess your faith if you were called to witness for Christ in court. Say to yourself something like this:

I believe in God the Father. Not in an all-pervading energy or force,—that is not a father,—but in a real, living, personal God, the Father and Friend and Companion of men. I believe that God is everywhere, and that He is here with me, at my side, in my very bosom. I do not understand how He can be everywhere at one and the same time; but I know that if my children were scattered around the world and I had infinite power, I would be with them all at one time and all the time. Then, too, I have seen a man stand before a great audience, and reach out an invisible hand, and take hold of five thousand men at once and move them all at will, as a little child would toss a handful of marbles into the air. If a mere man can thus project himself upon every spirit in a great hall, I see no

reason why God may not in a more real sense project Himself upon every spirit in the universe.

I believe that God made all things, including myself, and that He is abundantly able to take care of everything He has made, including myself. I believe that He made me in His own image. Not my body, but me, my essential being, the invisible, spiritual, immortal me. And having made me in His own image, I believe that His heart goes out toward me, as the heart of a father goes out toward the child that is born in his own image.

I believe that God has shown Himself to men in the person of His Son. I believe that He did this because it was necessary in order to save us from the awful ruin we were bringing upon ourselves by our sins. I believe that men's sins clog up the way between men and God, just as my sins against my neighbour clog up the way between my neighbour and myself; and that the death of God's Son, in a way I cannot understand, made it so easy to get back to God that the very worst of us can go to Him and be saved. Moreover, I believe in the Holy Spirit who comes to shed light on the way and to lead us into the way, if we are willing to walk therein.

I believe in everything that God has made. I

believe in His birds, and I listen to their music. I believe in His flowers, and I inhale their fragrance. I believe in His sunsets, and I feast my eyes upon them. I believe in His dumb creatures, and, when I do not forget, I try to be merciful to them. And I believe in my fellowmen. I believe that they are just as much worth saving as I am, whether they are white, yellow, red, brown or black. I believe that there is not a degenerate in the slums, not a murderer in his cell on whom there is not some sign of the finger prints of God. And while I cannot believe that God is unhappy, I believe that His heart goes out after every living soul, lost or saved. I believe that He loves the man who has wandered from Him even as a father loves his prodigal son. I believe that He loves the degenerate in the slums, the murderer in his cell, and even the poor nameless creature in her house of shame. I sometimes wonder if He is not the only one who does love them. And I wonder what He must think of us who draw our robes so closely about ourselves, set our noses in the air, and pass coldly by on the other side. If the pure God can love such as these, surely I can pity them, I who would reach out my hand to save a stray dog from drowning. And if the pure God can love such as these surely I can love Tom and Dick

and Harry and the most unspeakable boy that ever ran a teacher mad.

I believe in myself. Not for what I have done, for I have done nothing worthy of mention, and not for what I have made myself, for I have only been in God's way while He has been trying to make a man of me: but for what I may do and for what I may become by the help of God if I really want to do or become anything. I believe in my possibilities. I believe that if I want to be useful, God will make me useful; that if I want to be holy, God will make me holy, and that if I want to lead my pupils to Christ, God will help me to lead them to Christ.

I believe that I am a spirit; and I believe that Tom and Dick and Harry are spirits also. I know that body and spirit are so intertwined that my body is essential to me for this present life; but I believe that this physical body, this body of flesh and blood, is only a temporary provision to enable me to carry out my mission in this physical world, and that therefore I cannot afford to give my whole time and thought to it as if it were to last forever: "There is a natural body and there is a spiritual body," and "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God."

I believe that I am in the childhood of life; that this world is a training school in which I am

given an opportunity to prepare for the larger life to come; and that it is my business to count this life as my school term, and to remember that while a school may have a playground and play has its place in life, the aim of a school is not pleasure, but development without waste.

I believe that, as in school, toil and self-denial and doing things we do not want to do, and suffering if we do not do them, and never-ceasing testing are essential to prepare the pupil for life, so in the school of this life these things are essential to prepare us for the life to come, and that it is just as foolish for me to run from them as it is for my children to run from them at school. I believe that God uses these things to develop a child in Christ to a man in Christ, just as we use them to develop our own children into men. I believe in the sweat of man's face. I believe that he who saves his life shall lose it. I believe that he who runs from pain is unfit for life, either here or hereafter. I believe that nothing is to be depended upon until it has been put to the test, whether it is a thread, a muscle, a boiler, or a man. I believe in the rod that drives me back to God. I believe in the pruning knife. I believe in the pains that turn my thoughts to the cross and to the soothing power of Christ. I believe in the afflictions that come in troops, over-

whelming a man, breaking his grip on the world, stripping him of all that he has gathered around himself and casting him upon the ground stark and empty-handed, with nothing left but the power to whisper to God. It was such testing that, under the grace of God, gave us our glorious army of prophets, apostles, and martyrs, once our inspiration, but now, alas! our horror.

I believe in my fellow-man. I believe that he and I have the same Heavenly Father; therefore I believe that he is my brother. And I believe that I am my brother's keeper. I believe that Tom and Dick and Harry and all the rest of my pupils are my little brothers, and I believe that God is looking to me to help them. I believe that they have the same right to Christ that I have and I believe that God is looking to me to lead them to Christ.

I believe it, and by the help of God I am going to act accordingly. I am going to lead my pupils to Christ.

XV

IN THE LIGHT OF HIS FACE

WHEN we are doing nothing worth while in the Sunday-school it is partly because we are no longer sure that the Sunday-school is worth while. And when we are not sure that the Sunday-school is worth while it is wholly because our religious convictions have weakened and we are no longer looking at the Sunday-school in the light of the face of Christ. All teachers who have deep religious convictions are not leading their pupils to Christ, but I have never known a teacher whose religious convictions were weak to lead anybody to Christ. When our religion is no longer real to us, when the face of Christ fades from our vision, we begin to think of the Sunday-school apart from Christ, and naturally we begin to think of it as nothing more than a school for religious and moral instruction held on Sunday. And gradually all our ideals and ideas fall into harmony with and become one with the ideals and ideas of the public school teacher. Then follows a year

or two of vast enthusiasm, at the end of which we wake up one dark morning to find the fire all out, its beautiful visions gone and nothing left but a heap of cold ashes on the hearth. If the Sunday-school is nothing more than a school held on Sunday for the purpose of teaching certain religious and moral truths in the same way that the public school teacher teaches the three R's, then there is nothing to be very enthusiastic about. What public teacher would be enthusiastic over his work if he were given only half an hour a week to teach reading, writing and arithmetic and had no way to make his pupils study between times?

The teacher who has no higher conception of the Sunday-school than as a school for religious instruction or ethical culture may do some things and do them well, but he is not going to lead his pupils to Christ. We don't begin to lead our pupils to Christ until we learn to think of the Sunday-school as an opportunity to coöperate with Christ in His program for rescuing human spirits from the low level of sheer animalism and lifting them up to His own kingdom—the kingdom of the spirit.

I have in mind at this moment a bright-eyed girl who teaches all the week for seventy dollars a month. And she earns all she gets. This

bright-eyed girl also teaches every Sunday morning for nothing a year. And she gets all she earns.

During the week she is a brilliant success. When Sunday comes, she is a dismal failure. Do you ask why?

Because she goes to the public school to do her work and to the Sunday-school to keep her promise.

Because as a public school teacher she knows her work and believes in it, and devotes all the powers of her being to it; and as a Sunday-school teacher she does not know her work and does not devote any of the powers of her being to it.

When Miss Brighteyes goes into her classroom at the public school, she rolls up her sleeves—sometimes figuratively, sometimes literally—and plunges into her work with both hands and all her brains and all her heart and all her vital force, and she keeps at it until she has spent all she has; and when she gets home, she drops on her couch as limp as a wash-rag.

When she goes into her classroom at the Sunday-school she takes her seat with religious regard for her Sunday dress, feels her hat to see if it is on straight, adjusts a few pins and sundry feminine vanities, settles back in her chair, speaks

to her boys, fans herself, adjusts some more vanities and asks the boys if they have had a good time during the week. Then the boys begin to clamour for the promised baseball story; and when the clamour and story are over and she has reproved Bob for knocking Henry on the head with a book and Henry for sticking Bob in the side with a pin, she remembers that she has not asked for the Golden Text. And then the bell rings.

The other day when a friend promised to take her class the following Sunday and asked her for her lesson help, she said: "Oh, I don't know where mine is, but that makes no difference; just tell 'em a story—any old thing will do."

Why does this bright-eyed girl think it makes no difference? Why does she take the Sunday-school as a joke? Listen! In all her life this girl has never known of but one sort of school. To her a school is an institution designed to train young minds and store them with fundamental knowledge. And she knows what that means. She knows that it takes twenty-five hours a week of the hardest work a woman ever did to teach her pupils, and she knows that when she turns them over to the next grade there is so little to show for it all that she cries herself sick over it. And so when she took a class in the Sunday-

school just to please the superintendent, and because she had promised, and it dawned upon her for the first time in her life that the church was trying to run a Sunday-school on thirty minutes' teaching a week, it was all so utterly absurd that she laughed outright. And she didn't propose to undertake an impossibility; she was no witch, and she could not squeeze twenty-five hours into thirty minutes.

That is the whole story except that she stayed, and is still staying, because she has promised and because she found it soothing to the conscience to be enrolled among the "active" members of the church, and because she found that, after all, the Sunday-school was a good thing to keep children out of mischief, at least for a little while on Sunday.

For more than a hundred years we have been trying to get rid of this idea that the Sunday-school is a school in the sense that a day school is a school, and it is still with us. At a certain jumping-off place—never mind where—I found a Sunday-school that met every Sunday morning at eight o'clock and continued throughout the day. The text-books were several backless "Blueback" spellers, an old almanac or two, and a much-disfigured Bible. And the day was spent in teaching spelling! I thought that was

pretty far off the main line; but some time afterward I ran across a big city Sunday-school founded on the proposition that the Sunday-school is first and last a school, and engaged in the study of sacred history as history and sacred literature as literature; and I wondered which of the two should envy the other.

The superintendent of that big city Sunday-school would laugh at the poor illiterate who keeps a Bible in his room for the same reason that he keeps a horseshoe over his door, and yet he insists that a "scientific" study of sacred history and sacred literature will somehow work the miracle that is necessary to develop a miscellaneous mass of juvenile humanity into intelligent and useful Christian men and women.

We must say it over and over again as we have said it over and over in the past, that the Sunday-school is not a school in the sense that a day school is a school. The bright-eyed girl is right. If the Sunday-school is merely a day school, it is an absurdity, for the simple reason that you cannot squeeze twenty-five hours into thirty minutes. The public school is designed to develop young minds and store them with fundamental knowledge. As a matter of fact, it usually does more than this; and when it doesn't it is a failure. If the teachers don't

go further and break the law, which declares that religion shall not be taught in the public schools, their work is a failure. Many of them do unconsciously break this law and teach religion to their pupils, and it is because religion is thus unconsciously taught while the minds of the pupils are being developed, that the hope of the State is in a measure fulfilled and the children grow up to be useful citizens. But for the fact that a majority of the teachers in our public schools are women to whom the teaching of religion by word and example is so natural that they do it as unconsciously as they breathe, the public school would be a blunder if not a crime.

But we have no need for a day school on Sunday even in the hands of Christian teachers, for the simple reason that we have provided something better. We have the Sunday-school, which is designed not to develop the mind and store it with fundamental knowledge, but to develop the heart through the mind and store both heart and mind with transforming knowledge. In the public school we seek to "form" the mind; in the Sunday-school we seek to transform the character. In the public school we are dealing with the things of time, and the time element is essential; in the Sunday-school we are dealing with the things of eternity, and the

time element is incidental. It may take you twenty-five hours a week nine months in the year for twelve years to develop and store the mind of a boy to prepare him for life; it may not take you half a minute to drop a seed of truth into a young heart that will eventually result in a full-grown man of God ripe for life and eternity.

But do not misunderstand me. I do not mean to say that the Sunday-school is not a school and that it doesn't need all the time it can get and the very best equipment—trained teachers, a carefully worked out course of study, up-to-date lesson helps, and all that. It is a school, and as a school it needs all the time and all the equipment it is getting and a great deal more besides. What I mean to say is that the business of the Sunday-school teacher is not primarily with the mind, but with the heart—the soul; the essential, immortal man.

It is not our business to lead the mind to knowledge for the mind's sake; it is only our business to lead it to knowledge for the soul's sake. We are to lead the mind to knowledge that we may lead the soul to Christ. Nor is it our business to fit our pupils for society. We shall fit them for society if we are faithful to our mission, but our mission is not to fit them for

society: it is to fit them for the kingdom of God.

No doubt if Miss Brighteyes would do her work as faithfully Sunday morning as she does Monday morning, she would accomplish something in the way of developing the minds of her Sunday-school pupils and storing them with fundamental knowledge. But this is incidental. Her prime business on Sunday is with hearts, just as her prime business on Monday is with minds. The business of the Sunday-school is to lead souls to Christ; that is, it is to make men, women and children acquainted with Christ, to bring them into vital contact with Christ and to mould them into the image of Christ *by means of the transforming word of God in the hands of a transformed teacher, and by the direct aid of the Holy Spirit.* We deal with the mind in the Sunday-school, but not for its own sake. We use it as a vestibule through which we pass to the heart. We deal with the Bible, but not as a book of classical literature to be studied as literature; we use it as a vessel to carry the living, eternal, transforming truth to the heart. And we must reach the heart. We must not set down our truth-filled vessel in the vestibule.

No, Miss Brighteyes, you have made a great mistake. You do not need to squeeze twenty-

five hours into thirty minutes in order to do your work in the Sunday-school. What you need just now is not more time, but a vision of eternity, and a vision of the Christ of eternity. Go to God. Say to Him: "Lord, I am a teacher. I have been spending my life training children for society, and I am not satisfied. I want to train my children for Thy kingdom. Here is my mind: take it. Here is all I know about teaching; take it. Here is my heart; take it. Here is all the vital force of my body; take it. Take me and make me a teacher of Thy children. Show me the pattern by which Thou wouldst have me develop these boys Thou hast placed in my hands. Show me Thy Son. Burn His image into my heart. And go with me to my class. And, dear Lord, while I try to teach, do Thou be my teacher." Pray until you have reached the mountain-top of vision, and go direct from that mountain-top to your class. And though you may not squeeze twenty-five hours into thirty minutes you will work a greater miracle.

XVI

THE MASTER WORKMAN

IT is interesting to walk through a big shop and watch the workmen at their work. But it is even more interesting sometimes to listen to them at their talk. As when—but listen!

"Can't do it, Bill; 'tain't in my line."

"I could do it if I had fittin' tools," says Bill, flinging his chisel upon the bench.

A passing workman, an eagle-eyed, shaggy-bearded old man, picks up the chisel and runs his thumb over the edge. "What yer trying to do?" he snaps.

"Mortise this piece. 'Fraid it's going to split."

"Gimme room. Git out of my light."

And in five minutes the job is done, with Bill's derided chisel.

"Young man," says Old Eagle Eyes, "it ain't what's in your tools that counts; it's what's in you."

It's the same way all over the shop. Everywhere the talk of the young fellows is of tools.

They are going to do a great job when they get plenty of fine tools. Meanwhile the master workmen are picking up the tools at hand and doing the job.

Not that the master workmen are indifferent to tools. Old Eagle Eyes, I noticed, felt the edge of the despised chisel before he spoke. But they never put tools foremost. They don't even put training foremost. The master workman will be glad to look into your tool chest and he would like to know what you have in your head, but first of all he wants to know what there is in you. You may have plenty of good tools for your job and put plenty of up-to-date knowledge into it, but your job will never be any better than the man that is put into it. That's what the master workman says, and he ought to know. Indeed it is because he does know it that he is a master workman. No man can do a master's job until he has discovered for himself that a job is not a mere product of tools and training, but the utterance, the visible expression of the workman's own soul.

The scene in the workshop reminds me of some things I have overheard very often of late in another place.

"Can't do it. Not in my line. Wasn't trained for it, you know."

"I could do it if I had decent helps. They've got up-to-date helps in the Primary; why can't we have them here? You just can't teach with these old things."

"Oh, if I only had her training! She's got a new text-book on psychology and two new books on pedagogy and she's just come back from a teacher's institute and she's made them give her the latest helps, and she's just bound to succeed."

It's the way all over the Sunday-school. Wherever you find an apprentice, five to one you find somebody who imagines that all that is required to turn oneself into a master teacher is to get a lot of up-to-date tools and learn the up-to-date ways of handling them.

It is a distressing state of affairs for which many of us have ourselves alone to blame. For a dozen years we have been talking tools and rules as if there was nothing else under the sun worth talking about. We didn't intend to do it, but we have done it. Perhaps we could hardly have helped it; it is almost impossible to talk about a pressing need without over-emphasizing it, and here were two pressing needs. Anyway we have over-emphasized them. Some of us have so tremendously over-emphasized them that the young teachers within our reach have had no

chance to hear anything else. They have yet to hear the grim warning of Old Eagle Eyes:

"It ain't what's in your tools that counts; it's what's in you!"

If you will sit down and try to recall the teachers you have known you will be struck with one fact. As the small teachers pass in review before your mind's eye, you will notice their tools and their rules; when a great teacher—a teacher who is leading pupils to Christ—passes you will see no sign of tools or rules; you will see only a great soul; a powerful personality. You can hardly see the average college professor for his equipment; when Mark Hopkins comes in sight you see no equipment; you only see an old man sitting on one end of a log and an enchanted boy on the other—Garfield's picture of an ideal college.

The other day a distinguished educator was asked to name the teacher who had made the deepest impression upon him. He called the name of a man whose teaching was regarded by his up-to-date associates as a pedagogical joke. He was simply a mighty spirit—a spirit reinforced by the spirit of Christ; but that man, in spite of poor tools and poor rules, was one of the most powerful agencies in the making of great men that America has ever known.

Two of the foremost men in the service of Christ in Europe to-day came out of a poor little American college whose teachers were compelled to work without equipment and who had little to give their students except themselves. Happily those teachers were men—powerful personalities developed by contact with the Ideal Man—and when they put themselves into their job the result under God was men. Other colleges have turned out better machines, but it would be difficult to point to one that has turned out better men.

One of the most successful Primary Department superintendents I know never grows enthusiastic over tools or rules. She is interested in them but she never makes any great claims for them. She does not believe that if we seek first better helps and better training the kingdom of God will be added unto us. She puts the kingdom of God foremost. To her thinking the supreme aim of the teacher is to make the land of the spirit real to her pupils and to lead them into it, and she does not see how she is going to make it real to them and lead them into it if it is not real to herself and if she doesn't live in it herself. She has found by painful experience that it is impossible to realize the spiritual if one is always placing the emphasis upon the ma-

terial—upon rules and tools. And so while she does not neglect these things, the things that engross her are the things of the spirit. She likes to sit at the feet of a pedagogical expert, but she is happier when she is sitting with the mother of one of her pupils discussing the problems of the child's eternal welfare. She likes to study new methods, but she finds more to interest her in the eyes of a new pupil. She likes to go to teachers' meetings, but she must press a little child to her heart somewhere on the way. She likes to learn ways and means of reaching her children's minds, but she is far happier when she is learning ways and means of reaching their hearts. She likes to think of the master teachers, but for every thought that she gives to Froebel she gives a thousand to Christ. In a word she has put the kingdom of God foremost and she keeps it foremost.

Need I add that this good woman leads little children to Christ as naturally as she draws them to her own heart?

XVII

A FISHERMAN'S SECRET

HIGH up among the Alleghanies lies a beautiful lake. This lake is full of fish (so it is said!), and the little summer hotel on the shore is full of wonderful stories about them. You spend your first evening at this resort sitting on the veranda listening to these stories. That night you can hardly sleep; and the next morning you rise softly with the dawn, gather up your fishing tackle, and with a flutter of expectancy hurry off to try your luck.

Two hours later you climb slowly back up to the hotel, weary, downcast, silent, and—but for your tackle—empty-handed. At breakfast you listen to a man across the table telling a story that gives you another idea, and that evening at sunset you slip off quietly for another trial. Still no results. But you are too brave to give up so soon, and the next morning you gather yourself together with desperation and descend to the lake with a "do or die" air for a final attempt. But you don't do anything, and you don't die.

During the first week that I spent there everybody was having the same experience, and by Saturday night the reputation of the place as a fishing resort had suffered a total eclipse. One day the following week a new guest arrived with a lot of fishing tackle, and that night on the veranda the story-telling revived. The stranger —a slender, sunburned young fellow with quiet ways—listened for a little while in silence and then left us and went to bed. The next morning as I stepped out upon the veranda for a sniff of fresh air before breakfast there was a sudden scream, a wild rush, and the next instant a hysterical mob was dancing around the young stranger, who had just appeared at the top of the steps. He was loaded down with all the fish he could carry!

That afternoon, with the kindly aid of the quiet young stranger, we learned the secret of our trouble. We were no fishermen—that was all. We knew fishing tackle, but we did not know fish; we had no passion for fishing, and we had simply teased and nagged and worried those fish until they were disgusted and just wouldn't bite.

I interviewed the young man to find out why those fish had fairly run after him to be caught, and he told me his story. He had had a serious

nervous breakdown, and the doctor had sent him off to the Maine woods; and for two long years he had done nothing but fish. He had studied fish until he knew more about them than they knew about themselves, and he had developed a tremendous passion for fishing; and as a consequence when he went out to fish he knew almost intuitively just where to go and what to do and what to do next. That was all there was of it.

One will readily guess that I have told this story in order to say that this mountain resort is strikingly like some Sunday-schools I know. It is. In some schools the teachers have a habit of getting together on the veranda, so to speak, for a talk—a most excellent habit, by the way—and now and then somebody begins to tell stirring stories about the wonderful success somebody else has had in leading children to Christ; and presently a great wave of enthusiasm sweeps over the veranda, and all the would-be fishers of men spring to their feet and gather up a lot of fishing tackle in the shape of up-to-date methods of soul-winning and hurry off to their classes and try their luck. By and by they come back weary and downcast and empty-handed. The next day they try again, and still there are no results. One day a quiet-looking stranger comes along and takes a class, and almost before anybody

has had time to find out who he is he has led every one of his pupils to Christ.

Do I mean to say that if we are not winning our pupils for Christ it is simply because we are no fishermen? No, I would not say that; but I do mean to say that in many of our Sunday-schools we are getting no results for the same reason that those would-be fishermen at my mountain-resort got no results; we are not taking our fishing seriously. If we want to be successful fishers of men, we have got to be something more than veranda fishermen; we have got to do something more than talk about fish and study fishing tackle and rush off now and then in a gale of enthusiasm to try our luck for an hour on the lake. We have got to study our fish!

It is of no great importance for us to learn just what methods the most successful teachers use in winning their pupils for Christ. What we are interested in is the source from which their methods sprang. As that young man in the Maine woods studied fish until he had such an intimate knowledge of fish and such a passion for fishing that he knew almost intuitively when and where and how to cast his hook, so we must study our pupils until we have such an intimate knowledge of their souls and such a passion for

souls that we will know almost intuitively just when and where and how to do the thing that needs to be done, to speak the word that needs to be spoken to lead them to Christ.

Let me see if I can make my meaning clear. Saturday night has come, and I have put the world and all its cares away in its proper pigeon-hole and locked my desk and turned to think of the work of to-morrow. Now comes my chance. I am in the Maine woods, and there is but one thing before me. The lesson for to-morrow has been mastered, but my teaching plan has not been made. I find myself asking, "What do I want to accomplish to-morrow?" And this brings me straight to my pupils. I have not given much thought to my pupils heretofore, but I have been thinking much about Christ my Master lately. My heart has been yearning after Him. He has laid the burden of their souls upon me, and I cannot put it aside. I can see Tom's eyes looking at me now; and there is Dick, and there is Harry. There is a strange warmth in my heart, and something is telling me that those boys must be brought to Christ. Of course they must be brought to Christ. Am I going to let them pass through my hands and go out into the world unsaved? God forbid! I am simply bound to win Tom for Christ—and Dick, and Harry.

What can I do? I must think about this matter. I must take up their cases now—one by one. Here is Tom. Why hasn't Tom given his heart to Christ? He is a fine, honest, brave boy; what is the matter? I wonder if his home influences are just what they should be. I must find out. I'll make a memorandum of it now. I am going to see Tom Monday night, and in the meantime I am going to find out what I can about his folks. Also I must inquire about his associates. What next? Tom has some peculiarities. What are they? You can't treat him as you would Dick or Harry. And, by the way, have I not been expecting too much of Tom? Does Tom really know what religion means? Do any of my pupils know? Do they think of religion as joining the Church, or as a sort of pious snivel, or as a last resort for people who can't live much longer? Or do they think of it as a life—as the only real, worth-while, forever-abiding life; a life into which we are brought by the power of Christ; a life which we live with God as our Father and Saviour and guiding Spirit, and in which, as a natural consequence, we live with our fellow-men as our brothers? I must see about this to-morrow, whether I have a chance to bring it out in the lesson or not.

What does Tom think about me? Have I

succeeded in drawing him to my own heart? If not, is he likely to let me take him by the hand and lead him to Christ? What can I do—beginning to-morrow, to get closer to Tom? And what does Tom think of Christ? Have my pupils come to think of Christ as one who has a feeling for a fellow? Have I made Christ attractive to them? Is there any point in this lesson where I can turn their eyes to Christ and let them get a glimpse of His heart? And how about Tom's temptations? and how about his sense of sin? Of course I cannot convict him of sin—the Holy Spirit must do that—but may I not set something before him which the Holy Spirit can use to convict him of sin? And then there is my own influence—the influence I try to exert and my unconscious influence. What is it that goes out of my eyes and through my hand touch to Tom? Here I am teaching a religion of sacrifice, and only last Sunday I told my boys that I could not leave my business for a two hours' walk with them in the woods. Did Tom say to himself that I was teaching sacrifice and practicing greed and selfishness? I am teaching a religion of love. Have I shown any real love for Tom? Do I really love Tom? God pity me! What ——

But a great lump has come up into my throat,

and I cannot go further. I have not treated Tom right. I have not done my best for him. How many opportunities I have missed! Father, forgive me! And it was Christ, whom I promised to serve, who put Tom into my hands, and I promised Him that I would do my best for him. O Christ, forgive me!

If I should spend an hour every Saturday night studying my pupils in this way, would it be long before the fire began to burn—the fire of a great, enlightening, moving passion for Christ and for souls? And would not this mighty passion bring me so perfectly in line with the purpose of the Holy Spirit that I should know almost intuitively just when and where and how to do the things that need to be done to lead my pupils to Christ?

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